

TODAY

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TOMORROW

FOCUS ON TALENT
Young photographers triumph
WEEKEND

Mystery of explosion on TWA 800

Disintegrating engine or bomb caused death of 228 on board

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK
AND HARVEY ELLIOT

TWO main theories for the cause of a crash which killed all 228 people aboard a TWA jumbo jet shortly after take-off from New York were being urgently pursued by investigators last night: a catastrophic engine disintegration which sprayed red hot shards of metal into highly combustible fuel — or a terrorist bomb.

As speculation raged, President Clinton emphasised in Washington that the reason for the disaster was unknown. "Let's wait until we see the evidence," he said as he hailed rescuers who vainly tried to find survivors in the treacherous waters.

The President told victims' families: "America stands with you." He added, twice: "We do not know what caused this tragedy," and said: "I caution the American people against jumping to any conclusions."

Mike McCurry, a White House spokesman, said there had been "a variety of calls" on the eve of the opening of the Olympic Games, claiming responsibility for the crash, but their credibility was doubtful.

Among those killed were 16 high school students and five chaperones from Montoursville, Pennsylvania, on their way to a week-long language programme in France. 40 French citizens and 20 from Italy, one of whom, Christine Bailey, was reported to have had a British passport.

TWA flight 800, bound for Paris, was climbing at 13,400 ft when the explosion occurred. It caught fire and fell into the waters of Moriches Inlet, off the southern coast of Long Island. For hours the ocean was covered in flames as the fuel tanks burned.

Eight coastguard cutters

LH4356.
TW 800. ANNULÉ CANCELLED
KL 093.

The arrivals board at Charles de Gaulle airport, Paris

and a volunteer flotilla of 500 small boats spent yesterday retrieving bodies from the sea and scanning a 240-square mile area for wreckage of the 25-year-old Boeing 747-100.

Twelve hours after the crash the "rescue" effort was reclassified as a "search and recovery" as emergency workers concluded there was no chance of anyone surviving so long in the ocean. Last night it was reported that one of the flight recorders had been retrieved.

Off the coast, the 120-ft deep waters of the Atlantic offered up assorted debris, from pieces of the jumbo's fuselage to charred bodies. Across the area there was a pervasive smell of fuel, and small items of wreckage still carried flickering flames.

The aircraft disappeared from air traffic control radar screens at 8.48 pm New York time on Wednesday, 29 minutes after a take-off which had been delayed an hour for repairs to an item of ground

baggage equipment and by a late passenger. Flying conditions were described as perfect. The plane crashed 200 yards south of Fire Island, a skinny strip of land parallel to Long Island.

No other aircraft were reported close to flight 800, but a US military C-130 cargo plane arrived over the zone within minutes, from a training exercise. Colonel William Stratemeyer, who was aboard, said: "I saw two large orange fireballs. They looked like comets, coming straight down into the water."

Mike Weiss of the U.S. Air Force, also on the training flight, said: "We were startled by a big flash of light in the sky. The next thing we know we see huge amounts of smoke off the ocean floor." A "Mayday! Mayday!" message was heard by coast guards seconds after the explosion, but it was not known if it came from the doomed jet or someone who saw the blast and tried to

summon help. Sven Faret, piloting a private aeroplane 10 miles from the TWA jet, looked down to see the explosion. "It was the biggest thing I have ever seen in the sky," he said.

Master Sergeant Dennis Richardson of the New York Air Guard, one of the first to arrive at the scene of the crash after scrambling in a helicopter, said the rescue attempt was frustrated by the inferno fed by the 190,000lb of jet fuel.

As dusk turned to a moonless night, emergency workers struggled in the darkness. They were helped by "midnight-sun" floodlights, night-vision goggles, flares and infrared heat-sensing radars on many of the helicopters which scrambled to the scene.

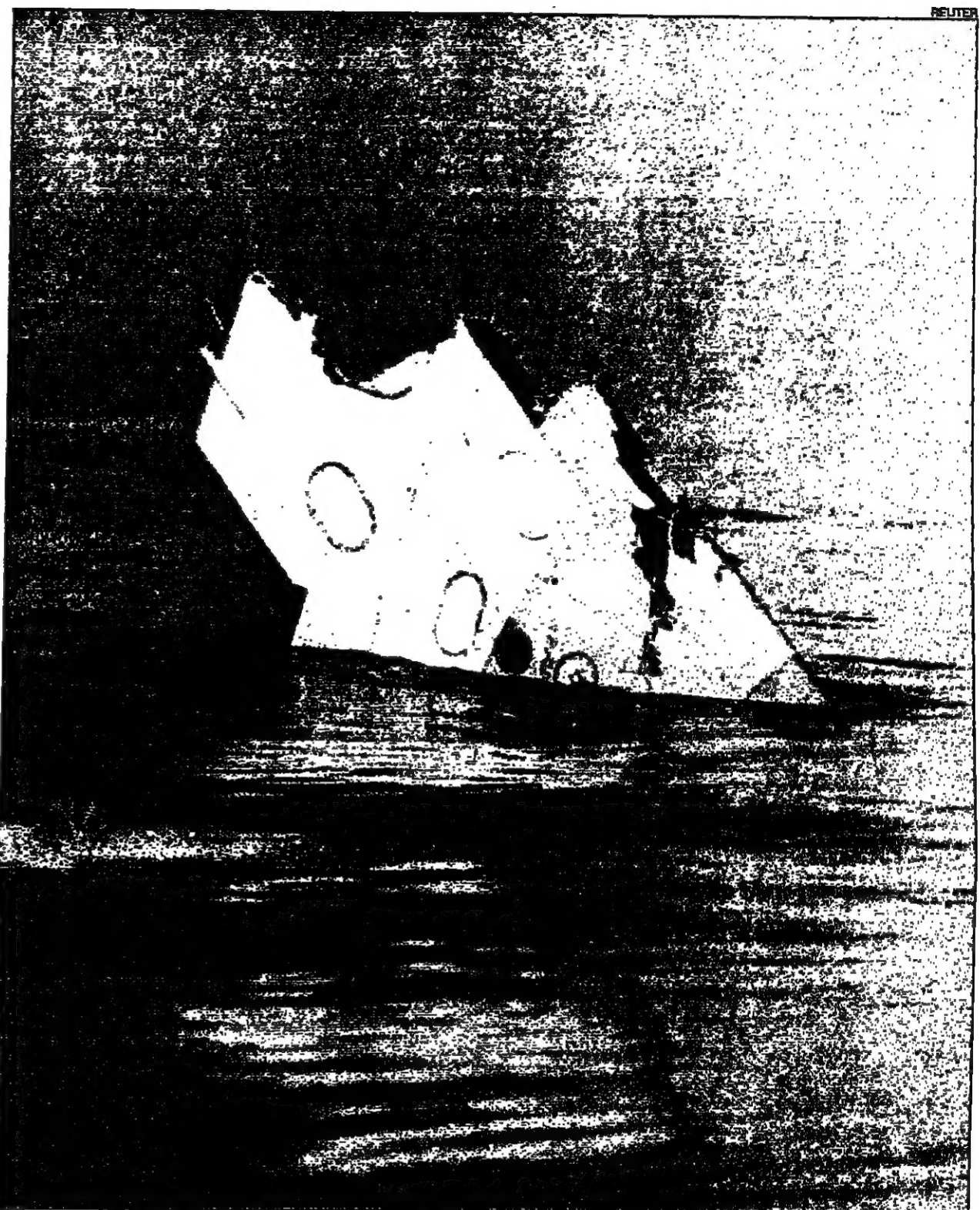
The difficulties were compounded by a summer fog and a 15-knot breeze later made the waters choppy. Yesterday the ocean was calm, allowing coastguards to recover scores of bodies, which were placed in black bags and taken to land. Among the flotsam were duffel bags, arm-rests, shoes, a wallet — and a letter written by a mother to her daughter.

In France, a trauma centre was opened at Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport, where relatives and friends of flight 800's passengers arrived. Some had not heard of the crash. Amid pitiful scenes, a woman arrived at the airport holding a single rose which she had plucked from a vase at home. President Chirac sent his condolences to President Clinton.

Victims' families at New York's Kennedy airport were taken by bus to a hotel where they were comforted by Red Cross volunteers, priests and helpers.

The city's mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, who was a friend of

Continued on page 2, col 5



Part of a wing of the doomed aircraft floats just south of Long Island. Witnesses told of orange fireballs in sky

Major rallies the troops with tilt at divided Labour

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR gave Conservative MPs their battle orders last night, telling them to stop being "bystanders or commentators" and to become advocates for the party and the policies in which they passionately believed.

In an end-of-session rallying call to the 1922 Committee, the Prime Minister told MPs to take their message to the party and the country over the summer and the autumn and to ask themselves every day whether they had done something to help Tories win the election.

His call for an end to bickering was bolstered by Sir Marcus Fox, the committee's chairman. He said all MPs should take a "vow of silence" unless they had something supportive to say.

Mr Major told the Tories that he sensed the mood of the country changing and declared that Labour was unravelling. The morale of Tory MPs has been boosted by clear indications of differences at the top of the Labour leadership over the Tube strike. Last night Mr Major called on Tony Blair and John Prescott and others on the front bench to say that they condemned the strike.

Mr Major virtually confirmed to his MPs that the election will be next April or

May when he said: "Don't take a holiday next spring."

The Government signalled yesterday that it will have full final programme. The Queen's Speech for the last session has been set for October 23, far earlier than usual, and the Budget for November 26.

Mr Major told MPs that when voters said it was time for a change, they should be reminded of what they might be changing to — higher taxes, higher gas and electricity bills, reducing inward investment, and less choice in education.

He attacked Labour as being "hypocrites", claiming to be the party of shareholders and then proposing a windfall tax that would hit the value of shares, claiming to be the party of the family and then removing child benefit for 16 to 18 year olds, claiming to be the party of job creation and then backing the social chapter which would destroy jobs.

The Prime Minister also confirmed that he would block agreement in the European inter-governmental conference until it agreed to close the loophole that allowed the 48 hour week to be imposed in Britain "through the back door".

Labour split and Peter Riddell, page 11

48 children hurt as bus hits bridge

BY ADAM FRESCO

AT LEAST 48 schoolchildren were injured yesterday when the roof of their double-deck bus was ripped off when it hit a low bridge in Cheshire.

Fifteen of the children, aged between five and ten, were seriously hurt and last night some were being operated on for head injuries.

The bus was taking them home after an end-of-term trip to Waterworld in Stoke when it crashed into the concrete and iron pedestrian bridge along a busway at Mordislaw, Runcorn.

Evan Morris of Cheshire Fire Brigade said that the roof had been torn off from the front to the back just above the level of the seats. Residents from nearby houses helped to carry the children from the bus and laid them on the verge.

The bus was carrying 76 children and two teachers from Palace Fields Junior School in Runcorn.

The busway is a network of single-carriageways that encircle the town and is designated for local buses only. The crash is believed to have happened on a road set aside for single deckers.

Richard Oswald, a spokesman for the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service, said: "It was horrific. The bus had tried to go under a concrete footbridge which was too low. It simply ripped the roof clean off it."

Judge says fiend who killed Sophie must not be freed

BY KATE ALDERSON AND MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE man who raped and murdered seven-year-old Sophie Hook was given three life sentences yesterday by a judge who called for greater protection for children.

Mr Justice Curtis recommended that Howard Hughes, 31, should never be freed and asked police to send their report on the case to the Home Office. "This case seems to be a clarion call for immediate steps to be taken to improve society's protection of its children," he said.

"There seems to be nothing in the way of a statutory system which enables responsible professionals to supervise and control a man like Howard Hughes."

It emerged at the end of the 19-day trial at Chester Crown Court that the killer had been linked to a string of sex attacks on children before taking Sophie from her uncle's garden in Llandudno, Gwynedd. She disappeared while sharing a tent with her sister and two cousins after a family party. Her body was found on a nearby beach the next morning.

Hughes, known as Mad Howard in his home town of Colwyn Bay, had been under surveillance by police for 16 years and had confessed to a paedophile friend that he wanted to murder a child.

are every parent's nightmare come to pass. No girl is or ever will be safe from you."

The judge then passed three life sentences, one for murder and one each on the two rape charges. Hughes had pleaded not guilty.

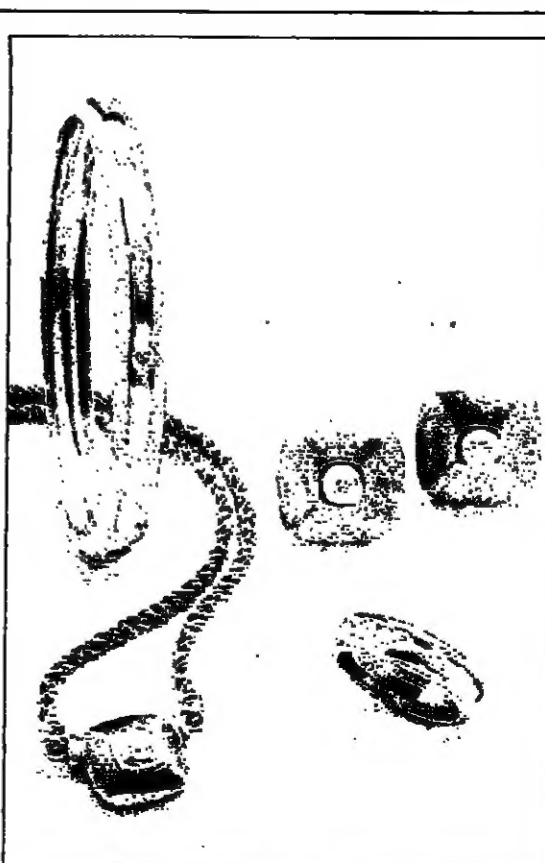
The sentence was greeted with applause and cheering from the public gallery. Hughes, in tears, mouthed "I didn't kill her" as he was led away.

Sophie's parents, Julie and Christopher, who have three other children, were too distressed to attend court. Danny Jones, Sophie's uncle, held his head in his hands and wept as sentence was passed.

Deadly shadow, page 7



Hughes: under police surveillance for 16 years



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Chief quits

The chief executive of English Heritage resigned yesterday following a report into "alleged administrative irregularities". Chris Green's departure, with immediate effect, was announced in a brief statement. Mr Green, a former British Rail manager, earned £101,000 a year.

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Security at highest levels as America responds to the lessons of Oklahoma and Dhahran

Air catastrophe increases fears in US of fanatics' attacks, admits Pentagon

FROM TOM RHODES
AND IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

THE PENTAGON admitted yesterday that growing fears about terrorism and national security were now the prime focus of America's defence community.

Although the cause remained unknown, the charred wreckage of Flight 800 in the waters off Long Island has concentrated minds even further. "Terrorism and national security are issues that are receiving a lot of horsepower in this building," said a senior Pentagon official. "And it's the focus of all the people at the top."

William Perry, the Defence Secretary, is taking the lead in the Clinton Administration's battle against both domestic and international terrorism. "Perry has been doing a lot of thinking about this since Saudi Arabia and, although he has been specific about troops, his message in conversations here is very broad," said the official. "We need to find ways to prevent this happening in the future. We need to improve intelligence and inter-agency communication."

This week Mr Perry an-

TERRORISM

nounced drastic changes in measures to protect American troops in Saudi Arabia from chemical and biological weapons and from terrorist bombings larger than the one that killed 19 American airmen in Dhahran last month. As many as 4,000 troops, or about two-thirds of the garrison, will be moved to more remote areas of the desert kingdom after the Pentagon received intelligence

year in which 168 died. In Washington last week, parking spaces were taken away from all federal buildings. Security measures at the White House, which had been tightened after various apparent attacks from gunmen and others, have been kept at the highest level.

Attempts by Congress to re-open parts of Pennsylvania Avenue have been all but

that he signed this spring. While the President made a plea against prejudging the cause of the TWA catastrophe, most Americans did immediately assume that it was the work of terrorists.

Like Britons learning to live with IRA threats, Americans have now become inured to the everyday inconveniences of security measures at airports and buildings and to the horrors of bombings.

□ **Holiday concern:** Travel officials are bracing themselves for a sudden drop in the number of American visitors to Britain should the TWA crash have been caused by a bomb. Last year 3,299,000 Americans came to Britain and in the first four months of this year — not the peak time — almost one million arrived. By the end of the year it is expected that last year's record figure will have been exceeded by a further 5 per cent.

Other countries in Europe which rely on Americans to boost their foreign earnings will also be watching for signs of a decline in visitor numbers. The standard package "milk run" around Europe is to land first in London, spend up to a week in Britain, then move on to Paris, Rome and Madrid.

Americans have become inured to the inconvenience of security measures and the horror of bombs

reports suggesting terrorists may strike again.

The basis of concern in the Clinton Administration is twofold. On the one hand, America has faced terrorist attacks by foreign cells in Dhahran, in Riyadh last November, and on its own soil at the World Trade Centre in New York three years ago. But the threat from homegrown bombers has provoked further anxiety since the Oklahoma City bombing last

voted by the Secret Service which has warned President Clinton against the measure.

Mr Clinton ducked a question yesterday over whether more should be done to ensure airline safety, but he acknowledged that his Government had already been taking a number of steps to upgrade the ability of the US to protect itself from terrorism and was working to implement measures in an anti-terrorism Bill

armed response if necessary. The FBI is also involved.

Many people in Atlanta remember the attack by Arab terrorists that killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972. The CIA has provided the Olympic security organisers with an assessment of the threats posed by extremist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

Security officers in Atlanta have staged mock hijackings and bombings, and made plans for counter-measures to nerve gas and germ attacks. During one rehearsed operation on the subway earlier this year, however, one of the "kidnappers" escaped and four hostages "died".



President Clinton urged caution after the crash: "Don't jump to conclusions."

THE WORST DISASTERS

THE death toll in yesterday's crash makes it the second-worst aviation accident in American history, and the 15th worst worldwide.

□ 583 — March 27, 1977: A KLM Boeing 747 and PanAm 747 collided and burst into flames on runway at Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands.

□ 520 — August 12, 1985: A Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 crashed into Mount Osutaka.

□ 350 — January 8, 1996: At least 350 died when an Antonov-32 cargo plane crashed into a market in Kinshasa, Zaire.

□ 346 — March 3, 1974: A Turkish Airlines DC10 crashed into a forest north-east of Paris shortly after takeoff from Orly Airport.

□ 329 — June 23, 1985: An Air India Boeing 747 plunged into the sea off the Irish coast, apparently following an explosion.

□ 301 — August 19, 1980: Saudi Arabian Airlines TriStar caught fire at Riyadh airport.

□ 290 — July 3, 1988: Iran Air A300 Airbus shot down over the Gulf by the US warship Vincennes.

□ 273 — May 25, 1979: An American Airlines DC10 crashed after take-off from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

□ 270 — December 21, 1988: PanAm 747 crashed on Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 people aboard and 11 in Lockerbie.

□ 269 — September 1, 1983: Korean Air Lines 747 shot down by a Soviet fighter.

□ 264 — April 26, 1994: China Airlines Airbus crashed and exploded at Nagoya, Japan.

□ 261 — July 11, 1991: Chartered Canadian DC-8 crashed during an emergency landing at Jeddah.

□ 257 — November 28, 1979: Air New Zealand DC10 from Auckland to the South Pole hit Mount Erebus in Antarctica.

□ 256 — December 12, 1985: Arrow Air DC3 chartered by US military crashed after take-off from Newfoundland.

□ 223 — May 26, 1991: Landa-Air Boeing 767-300 exploded in mid-air. (Reuters)

Atlanta goes on state of war alert

FROM JOHN GOODBODY
IN ATLANTA

SECURITY for today's opening of the Olympic Games by President Clinton has been stepped up amid fears that the TWA disaster may have been the result of a terrorist bomb.

The airport in Atlanta was yesterday placed on level four security for the first time since the Gulf War. This means that only travellers with tickets can enter terminal buildings.

As part of the £200-million Olympic security operation, more than 30,000 troops, police and federal agents were on stand-by yesterday awaiting Mr Clinton's arrival. Guests at the President's ho-

tel, which is already ringed by armed guards, were given special security passes.

William Rathburn, head of Olympic security, said: "We have done everything possible. Our security system is in place, we have hundreds of thousands of people involved in the effort. We have invested hundreds of millions of dollars. I think we are as ready as we can be."

A spokesman at the local Hartsfield Airport, which is welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors for the opening ceremony, said security was being increased. The

lavish show will be broadcast to an estimated 3.5 billion people worldwide.

William Perry, the US Defence Secretary, has emphasised that a military presence will provide insurance against violence at the Games. Security had already been tightened after last month's terrorist bombing that killed 19 Americans near Dhahran in Saudi Arabia.

US troops who will be visually and electronically monitoring vehicles and packages will not be armed. They are relying on about 50 local law enforcement agencies for

armed response if necessary. The FBI is also involved.

Many people in Atlanta remember the attack by Arab terrorists that killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972. The CIA has provided the Olympic security organisers with an assessment of the threats posed by extremist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

Security officers in Atlanta have staged mock hijackings and bombings, and made plans for counter-measures to nerve gas and germ attacks. During one rehearsed operation on the subway earlier this year, however, one of the "kidnappers" escaped and four hostages "died".

Lax security denied by Athens

FROM JOHN CARR
IN ATHENS

GREEK civil aviation authorities yesterday ruled out the possibility that a security lapse at Athens Airport on Wednesday could have placed the ill-fated TWA Boeing 747 in danger before it took off for New York. Airport officials dismissed the suggestion as "unacceptable".

The plane was about two hours on the ground here," a civil aviation spokesman said. "It was guarded at all times."

GREECE

The passengers bound for New York passed through three separate security controls, one by Athens Airport staff and two by TWA staff, the spokesman said.

The Athens connection has touched a raw nerve for the Greek Government. Earlier an unofficial US document warned airline travellers that security at Athens airport was inadequate.

Since then, according to Greek and American officials, security has been considerably improved.

Airport opens crisis centre to counsel the bereaved

FROM SUSAN BELL AND ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

MOST relatives and friends of passengers were already distraught when they approached the large black "arrivals" board at Charles de Gaulle Airport. A few who had not yet heard the news were merely puzzled. The TWA flight was the only one listed as cancelled out of 30. The notice was later removed completely from the board.

Some relatives and friends sobbed openly; others, obviously in deep shock, looked eerily calm as they were escorted by police, airport officials and medical staff past the barrage of press and through the police cordon to a trauma centre, discreetly tucked away on an upper level of the airport. There a team of 20 psychologists, doctors and Red Cross staff attempted to comfort them. The crisis centre, which was set up after the 1994 hijacking of a French Airbus in Algeria, was quickly reactivated as news of the disaster came through.

"Help us!" cried a teenage girl in jeans and black shirt through her tears as she threw herself into the arms of an older woman who appeared to be her mother. They were quickly led into the trauma centre by security guards.

"About 50 per cent of the people we are treating still think there is some hope and refuse to accept the accident has happened," said Dr Michel Clerel, the airport's chief medical officer, as he emerged from the centre. Dr Clerel said the psychologists' main task was to listen to the bereaved and to try to help them resign themselves in the uncertainty.

FRANCE

"We have to put them in a mental state of waiting... before eventually confirming to them the loss of a loved one," he said. "We get them to talk and discuss their feelings with specialists, then we leave them alone for ten or 15 minutes and we speak to them again."

About 40 people, including several Americans, were being cared for at the centre, where Dr Clerel said there were a total of 50 people in place to receive them.

TWA officials and airport

authorities set up the trauma centre at Gate 12, Terminal 1, where the flight had been due to arrive.

The centre comprised three separate rooms: a control room staffed with police, TWA and airport officials, an information centre where trained volunteers drawn from airport staff manned 15 information lines, and a comfortable lounge area with armchairs, small tables and refreshments where the families and friends of victims were received by psychologists and medical staff.

One French journalist who visited the centre said she was moved by the compassionate and gentle approach of the staff towards the bereaved. Although most people seemed to be in deep shock and several were crying, there were no scenes of hysteria, she said.

About 40 French nationals were believed to be among the dead.

President Chirac, who is on an official visit to Congo, wrote to President Clinton, expressing his condolences. He spoke of his "strong emotion and consternation".

Mystery of explosion aboard TWA 800

Continued from page 1

one of the victims, spent all night with the families of the dead. "They are going through torture, clutching pictures of their relations and looking for answers," he said.

Mr Giuliani added that four people who arrived at the hotel were relieved to discover that their loved ones had taken different flights.

For others, there was no comfort. One woman in her 20s ran into the airport terminal screaming: "I need information." A middle-aged man, his face white with anguish, shouted: "My daughter was on the flight. I want to know what the hell is going on."

The fiancé of one of the flight attendants telephoned a television station. The man, who did not give his name, said he would drive to the mortuary "so that I can actually look at her, actually look at the body."

Whatever the cause of the crash is eventually found to be, the disaster will have far-reaching repercussions for airlines, security, and world air travel generally.

The clues that could eventually solve the mystery could lie in the bodies of the victims and the seats, rather than the twisted and waterlogged flight recorders.

Using techniques developed in Britain during the Lockerbie bombing jet crash inquiry, American investigators will be looking for traces of explosives, burn marks, or evidence that metal was hurled into seats from an explosion.

If a bomb went off in the cabin or a luggage hold, material would have been flung at a speed of 24,000 feet per second, at least ten times

faster than if the aircraft broke up in mid air. The bright orange flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder will have cut off immediately after the explosion as the electrical supply was severed. But the voice recorder may show a millisecond of sound.

The Boeing 747-100 was built in 1971 and owned briefly by Eastern Airlines before TWA. It used to fly the New York to Israel route, and before Wednesday night's flight had been in Athens, where the airport has a dubious security record.

The crash is the second worst aviation accident in America and the 15th worst worldwide. The jetliner had two captains in the cockpit, both highly experienced. Captain Steve Snyder, hired by TWA in 1964, was conducting

a routine in-flight review of Captain Ralph Kevorkian, who was hired by the company in 1965. A second complete TWA crew of 17 was sitting in the cabin of the plane, which it was scheduled to fly back to America on the return leg.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation yesterday took control of the investigation and Robert Francis of the US National Transport Safety Board said: "There is a suggestion of criminal activity."

Victims' bodies were being examined for signs of any incendiary accelerant which might strengthen theories of a bomb. The investigation will look at Kennedy airport's security, which has been on a heightened state of alert since the visit of the Pope to New York last October, and because of the Olympic Games, which start today in Atlanta, Georgia.

You could then everything

Lockerbi experts plane w

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MATTHEW PARRIS IS ON PAGE 4

A 'flare in the sky' before jet broke in two suggests Flight 800 was on fire before it exploded

Lockerbie bomb experts will sift plane wreckage

By HARVEY ELLIOT, AVIATION CORRESPONDENT, AND SHIRLEY ENGLISH

INVESTIGATION

BRITISH scientists from the air accident investigation branch at Farnborough and the Ministry of Defence research department are likely to fly to Washington in help to determine whether a bomb was the cause of the TWA accident.

But witnesses say that the aircraft looked like a "flare" before it broke into two giant orange balls of fire, indicating that it may have been ablaze before it exploded.

The four Pratt and Whitney engines are supposed to withstand any failure and prevent shards of metal from rupturing fuel lines or fuel tanks. But there have been many incidents in the past when just such an "impossibility" has happened. Only last week, an engine on a Delta Airlines MD80 jet split apart and sent metal hurtling into the cabin, killing two passengers sitting alongside. It could not happen, said the manufacturers and safety experts, but it did.

A British Airways Boeing 737 burst into flames on the runway at Manchester Airport when a combustion chamber exploded in an engine, severing fuel lines and causing an internal fire in which 35 people died. Luckily it was on the runway. It could not happen, it had been said. But it did.

The ValuJet Boeing 737 which crashed into a Florida swamp should also not have caught fire in the air. But it did. There are many other recorded incidents, some of them fatal, which have been collected on accident files which will now be studied by the investigators.

Had such incidents happened as Flight 800 climbed after take-off on its way from New York to Paris, the effect would have been almost exactly that described by witnesses — the "flare" of ignited fuel from a severed fuel line to the engine, followed by an explosion as the main fuel tanks in the wings were engulfed in the flames and another as the

aircraft broke into two flaming pieces.

To prove that this was the cause, and not a bomb, investigators will be anxious to examine a reported brief "mayday" call made just before the aircraft disappeared from radar screens. It was so short that air traffic controllers cannot even be certain that it came from the doomed TWA jet. But, if it did, it may also contain background sounds of a fire on board. They will also want to trace each of the engines to establish whether one, or even two, broke away, such as those which caused another Boeing 747 to crash into a block of flats in Amsterdam in 1992 with the loss of four crew and 43 people on the ground.

Each time there is an accident, safety is tightened in the hope of preventing anything like it happening again. But in the first six months of this year, 609 people died in world airline accidents compared

with only 206 in the first six months of last year. The deaths occurred in 25 fatal crashes, four of which involved large passenger-carrying jets.

Inevitably, questions will be asked about the age of the TWA jet. It was built in 1971 and first delivered to Eastern before being sold to TWA. But there are hundreds of old jets flying safely around the world. British Airways alone has 15 Boeing 747-100 series which are of similar age.

Every part has been replaced several times in the carefully monitored series of maintenance checks which all commercial aircraft have to undergo. The Federal Aviation Authority has some of the toughest safety inspection regulations of all, including special modifications and more regular checks on older jets.

The age of the aircraft is, therefore, unlikely to have any direct bearing on the crash. But as an outside chance, the investigators will also be keen to find the rear pressure bulkhead to establish whether it ruptured and to study the cargo manifest to ensure that it did not contain any inflammable material.

The process of piecing together the final moments of the flight will be far more difficult than the 21-month investigation into the Lockerbie disaster, a British scientist said.

Professor Anthony Busuttill, of Edinburgh University, was a key figure in the 1988 Lockerbie investigation which first confirmed that a bomb was to blame after finding soot deposits on the airframe.

At Lockerbie, scientists managed to collect 90 per cent of the Boeing 747's scattered fuselage, which left a trail 80 miles south of the town. But the TWA wreckage is spread over "a vast area and there is movement of the water", said Professor Busuttill. "Retrieving the bodies and wreckage will be difficult."

Scots offer of helpline

THE families of Lockerbie victims yesterday set up a helpline for relatives of those killed in the American crash (Shirley English writes).

Jim Swire, of UK Families Flight 103, who lost his daughter, Flora, in the Lockerbie disaster, said: "When something like this happens it reminds you of the early days." He hoped TWA had accurate passenger records, which "was not the case at Lockerbie".

Last night the shocked Lockerbie community sent its sympathy to relatives of the American crash victims. Stephen Berry, a councillor, said: "Our thoughts are with them."



A Red Cross disaster worker at Kennedy Airport in New York supports a relative of a passenger who was on the crashed aircraft

Town mourns for 16 children on school trip

By QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SIXTEEN pupils from a small town school died in the disaster, along with five adults who were accompanying them to France for a summer language course.

The children attended Mountourville High School, northern Pennsylvania, where yesterday fellow pupils and teachers were coming to terms with the loss. The day before they had waved goodbye to their Paris-bound friends who were members of the school's French Club.

David Black, the school's superintendent, described a sombre mood in the classrooms and corridors. "Many

of the parents have come in and we have counsellors to take care of people," he said.

The 16 children, most from rural homes, had been "bubbling with excitement" when they left for their trip, their luggage decorated with stickers of the Eiffel Tower. In their bags were French text books containing useful phrases which they practised on each other as they waited to check in at the TWA desk at Kennedy airport.

"They were exceptional kids, both academically and socially, the kind of kids you'd like to take home and make your own," said Dan Chandler, the headmaster.

The wife and niece of Wayne Shorter, the American jazz saxophonist, were also among

the victims, the organisers of the Toulon Jazz Festival said yesterday. The two women were to play today at the festival.

Also feared to have died in the crash were Vera Peeney, an Irish emigrant from Kilmore in Co Roscommon,

and her 17-year-old daughter Deirdre. Mrs Peeney was believed to have been travelling to Paris on the first leg of a journey home to Ireland for a summer holiday. Her husband is a TWA employee. She was understood to have left Ireland with other members of her family for a new home in

the United States around 20 years ago.

Italian officials were yesterday trying to identify 19 passengers who were thought to have been switched to the aircraft after their TWA New York-Rome flight was cancelled because of a crew shortage.

They were to have been joined by Domenico Consales, 66, of White Oak, Pennsylvania, but because he arrived several hours early at Kennedy Airport he was switched to a third flight which arrived at Rome yesterday morning.

An airline spokesman said last night that all passengers had been identified. "We are now contacting all the families of the victims," he said. It is believed that between

40 and 70 of the passengers were French. The tragedy triggered the use of the 30 counsellors and crisis managers who are on call around the clock at Charles de Gaulle Airport. TWA set up a crisis centre for relatives of passengers at Leonardo Da Vinci Airport outside Rome.

As the Queen and John Major joined other world leaders in sending messages of sympathy to the White House, President Clinton moved swiftly to calm America's fears about terrorist attacks in the wake of the explosion, which came just hours before the opening of the Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia.

Mr Clinton said: "We do not know what caused this tragedy."

'You could see balls of flame, then everything disappeared'

By QUENTIN LETTS
AND MICHAEL KALLENBACH

RESIDENTS of the Hamptons, the fashionable Long Island enclave, were barbecuing supper in their gardens and strolling on the beach, awaiting sunset, when they saw a flash of light and looked up to see TWA Flight 800's fiery descent to the waters of Moriches Inlet.

Mike Gilligan, from Westhampton, said: "At first it was like a fireworks display. The plane jaggedly exploded all sorts of debris across the sky. I waited, expecting to hear a sonic boom. Fifteen seconds later came a low rumble, followed by the sight of black smoke."

Marie Murray, from East Moriches, said: "I heard a very loud boom, followed by another. I was on the phone to a friend at the time and said, 'God, did you hear that?' My whole house shook. I saw a cluster of red."

Roland Penney and his son Randy were near the beach when they saw the crash. They immediately jumped into their boat and hurried to the site, finding debris floating on the surface. "Horrible, horrible," said Mr Penney Sr, who steered his boat as near as he dared to the Boeing 747's burning jet fuel.

"We were looking for survivors and hoped to find someone holding on to a lifejacket."



New Jersey police bring crash victims' bodies ashore

We found two people, who were dead, still strapped into their seats. There were no burn marks on the people we saw." Other reports, however, spoke of bodies being badly burned.

Victor Fehner, 47, who was in the shallows on his 17th dinghy, said: "It looked like the wing came off. You could see two balls of flame, then everything disappeared."

Jackie Marlow, who had just been fishing, said: "There was a great fire. Eventually the plane just spread apart and there was a loud thump. I felt the tremor when it hit the water."

Jim Ahrens, a barman at

John Scott's Raw Bar, near Westhampton Beach, said: "It was this comet-like explosion in the sky. There was a column of fire all the way to the water, straight down."

June O'Reilly, a dentist living in Amagansett, on the tip of eastern Long Island, was driving home from Manhattan along the Long Island Expressway, when "I suddenly saw this golden glow in the air. It looked like a firebomb in the sky."

She immediately turned to a local radio station. "I had hoped it was a mechanical failure," she said. "But my gut reaction tells me something else."

Dr O'Reilly, who travels to Paris regularly — she was last there in April to run in the marathon — said that only last weekend she had been at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington where she viewed a new exhibition on TWA and its role in aviation history.

Dawn Davis, who is the bookkeeper at Larry's Crab House in East Moriches on Long Island, said: "The streets are closed, and the Coast Guard, which is next door to where I work, is only allowing the media back."

Dan Pulick, 22, a maintenance worker, was driving to meet some friends in Westhampton Beach when suddenly he saw what he described as "a little ball in the sky over my head. I wasn't sure what I was witnessing. I thought it was coming down pretty quickly. Then a third of the way before the ocean, it exploded and there was this huge ball of fire."

"I have never seen anything this big before. It gained speed as it exploded. I was 500 yards from the beach, and in my car I could feel the explosion. It must have shaken everything around me for miles."

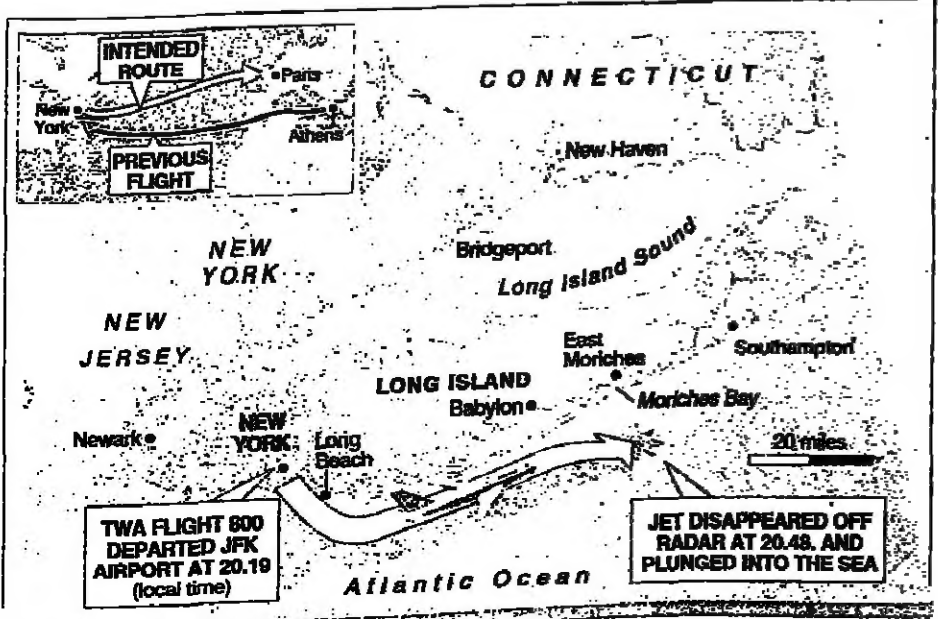
Mr Pulick and a friend went to view what had happened from the top of a nearby building with a pair of binoculars. "I drove down to the scene soon after that, and with all the helicopters I realised there was nothing I could do."

HIV-infected blood aboard

Moriches, New York: Rescue crews searching for survivors are keeping a lookout for an eight-litre container of blood contaminated with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, according to the US Coast Guard.

Dr Alfred Saah of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institution said the risk of rescue workers becoming contaminated was close to nil. He added that if the container broke on impact the risks were even less because the blood would be diluted in the ocean and that the virus could not survive.

The Coast Guard did not say why the blood was being carried on the flight. (AFP)



Meet Vanessa.



Vanessa's just insured the contents of her home for £10.20 a month.

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Hogging the limelight: a bad afternoon with Ann and Nick

Mr Nicholas Winterton is the Conservative MP for a Cheshire seat, Macclesfield. Mrs Ann Winterton represents a neighbouring constituency, Congleton. She, too, is a Tory. The couple are married.

Nicholas (if we may be so familiar) sits on the front bench, below the gangway. Ann (if she will permit us) sits a couple of rows behind him. As a duo, they bring to the Commons a sort of Gothic version of the former daytime TV show, *Good Morning*

with Anne and Nick, in which their guests are tortured until they surrender, beg for mercy, or weep.

Both were in their places for Agriculture Questions yesterday. Both wanted to ask about farming. They were not quite close enough to share a sofa, but ideologically they do.

Their special guest for the afternoon was the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg. But unlike the other Anne and Nick, this Anne and Nick were not there to put their interviewee at his ease. Poor Mr

Hogg had been knocked about a bit before he joined the couple, and subjected to jeers from much of his audience — the opposition side — from the start. There was no orange juice, no curtains, no pastel colours and no plants. Just Betty Boothroyd, looking grim, and a couple of uniformed men from the Sergeant at Arms department.

Anne and Nick would invite their guests to sit down. Ann and Nick made their stand up, facing in the wrong direction and obliged to crane



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

round to answer. In went Nick, first, with the knee and boot he is the hard man of the duo. He chose BSE and the European Court as his stick with which to beat Hogg, and began to shout.

Nothing is ever understated with this Nick. Every word, every "it", "an" or even "the" is belted out. "Is this not an

affront to the SOVEREIGNTY and INTEGRITY of this PARLIAMENT? Does my Rt Hon friend not agree with ME that the EUROPEAN COURT is a court of VESTED INTERESTS?"

Mr Hogg, turning on the spit, begged leave to express himself in more moderate terms, as the audience jeered.

And now it was Ann's turn. She is less brutal in her style — the soft cop: chillingly courteous at all times.

She chose the Common Agricultural Policy with which to abuse her guest: a cruel little inquiry about the relative sizes of agricultural holdings. Herr Fischer, and the British disadvantage. Ann said "Herr Fischer" with special menace.

"Quite right!" shouted Nick, as Ann finished her question, further discomfiting their guest, who stammered out (to

what Ann and Nick knew was an impossible question) the best reply he could. More jeers. Then the couple released their interviewee to be kicked around by members of the audience, their work done.

Watching Hogg's subsequent torments, Nick looked relaxed — sunk onto his bench with a jovial brutality.

Ann pursed her lips a little and watched tensely, like a bird of prey. Neither of them smiled.

Readers who have ever heard *The Jamesons* on BBC

Radio 2 will understand this sketch's proposal that, beyond daytime TV, the Members for Macclesfield and Congleton might like to do a hard-core radio show, *The Wintertons*, later at night. Unlike Derek and Ellen Jameson, who only tease, Nick and Ann might aim to get their guests to cry, live and on air.

But they had better get their bid in fast. For the day is coming when, for sheer, creepy, flesh-tingling horror, *The Blairs* will out-chill every rival.

Lilley asks for tenders to operate child benefit

By DOMINIC KENNEDY
SOCIAL AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

THE handover of 1,800 civil servants to a private company, the first step in privatising the Department of Social Security, will be announced by Peter Lilley today. The minister will invite tenders for the administration of child benefit, paid to the mothers of 13 million school-age children from offices at Washington, Tyne and Wear.

Mr Lilley is expected to announce further privatisations of benefit payments, transferring the bulk of the 68,000 employees of the Benefits Agency into private hands. His department could eventually be reduced to a small staff drawing up contracts and checking that the terms are properly met.

Child benefit has been chosen to lead the way because it is the easiest to administer, being paid without means tests or the provision of much information beyond the existence of a baby.

From next April, private firms will be able to tender to provide a wide variety of services to the department. They will have the opportunity to work for the Benefits Agency, which pays and administers social security benefits, the Contributions Agency, which manages National Insurance, and the Child Support Agency, which deals with maintenance payments.

Mr Lilley hopes to achieve a cut of 25 per cent from the £3 billion-a-year administration budget.

MPs accuse Birt of acting like tsar on World Service

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

MPs yesterday attacked John Birt, the Director-General of the BBC, over his planned reforms of the World Service. They accused Mr Birt of being dictatorial, arrogant and running the BBC like "a kind of tsar". One MP said he was not confident that the World Service was in safe hands and another urged Mr Birt to halt the reforms.

The criticism came as Mr Birt gave evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee after widespread public criticism of his reforms. In June Mr Birt announced plans to merge the news operations of the World Service and the domestic BBC.

While Mr Birt says it would save money and improve the service, critics say it would risk the World Service's international reputation.

Such is the feeling in Westminster that 238 MPs from all parties have signed a Commons motion expressing concern. It urges Mr Birt and the BBC governors to "guarantee that the distinctive nature of the World Service programming with its unrivalled reputation for impartiality will not be impaired by any organisational changes".

Mr Birt was repeatedly questioned yesterday about the secrecy surrounding the decisions.

MPs asked why Sam Younger, managing director of the World Service, and Bob Phillips, deputy Director-General of the BBC, were told about the reforms only just before they were made public.

Both Mr Birt's deputies,

who were also at the committee, repeatedly evaded questions about how they felt when being presented with the reforms as a fait accompli.

Mr Younger eventually admitted that he had been "shocked" but was now convinced that the plans would benefit the World Service. Mr Phillips, pressed four times, finally admitted he had been "surprised" by some of the details. He said: "It is the Director-General's right to decide what is appropriate."

Robert Wareing, Labour MP for Liverpool West Derby, said he was astonished that Mr Birt had not told senior managers about his reforms until a day before they were announced. "Don't you think that was a dereliction of duty?" he asked. "You seem not to be acting like a kind of tsar."

Michael Jopling, the former Tory Chief Whip, said no one on the committee understood why Mr Birt thought that it was "inappropriate" for the reforms to be discussed by his senior staff. Mr Birt said he had met and consulted more staff than any other BBC Director-General.

David Sumberg, Tory MP for Bury South, said Mr Birt gave him "no confidence that the future of the World Service is in safe hands".

Dennis Canavan, Labour MP for Falkirk West, said: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Why are you interfering in something that has such a major reputation and track record?" Mr Birt replied: "Because we want to make it better."



John Birt faced questioning on World Service

Mike Gapes, Labour MP for Ilford South, pressed Mr Birt over the different production costs between the BBC's domestic news service and the World Service. Mr Birt admitted the exact figures were difficult to determine and that no one really knew them.

Mr Gapes urged Mr Birt to carry out further investigations into cost differences. "Wouldn't it be sensible now to stop your reorganisation until that has been done?"

Mr Birt said he and the BBC governors had the statutory right to decide the principles of

any major strategic and structural change to the BBC.

"The scale of the changes were such that we agreed that consultation would not be proper in these circumstances." But he added that the way these changes were implemented would be open to full consultation.

He said: "I am as passionate about the World Service as anybody who has written about it in recent days. It is inherently ridiculous to suggest that I would want to do anything other than good for the World Service."

Suspected device is detonated in Dublin

By AUDREY MAGEE
AND NICHOLAS WATT

ARMY bomb disposal experts in Dublin carried out a controlled explosion last night after suspected loyalist terrorists claimed they had planted a bomb in the city centre.

The Irish police said last night that no device had been found after the controlled explosion, at about 6pm, in a skip outside a store near O'Connell Street. At 12.25pm a man claiming to be from the Ulster Freedom Fighters telephoned the BBC in Belfast and, using a recognised code word, gave a warning that a bomb had been planted in the street. The UFF is a cover name for the terrorist Ulster Defence Association.

Police evacuated the street and searched shops and businesses for several hours before concentrating on the skip.

There were fears last night that the UFF might have made the call without planting a device, to cause alarm.

Loyalist political leaders had given warning last weekend that the terrorists' ceasefire was close to breaking-point in the wake of Sunday's republican bomb attack in Enniskillen.

In the Commons yesterday, John Major, responding to concerns expressed by Tony Blair, urged political leaders to speed up moves towards substantive inter-party discussions on Northern Ireland. Mr Major pleaded with the parties to put aside the hostility of recent weeks and pressed for improvement on the "inadequate" progress in the talks.

He made clear that ministers were not prepared to postpone the multi-party talks despite the calls of some MPs for a "cooling off" period. He also played down suggestions of a deep rift with John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and Dick Spring, the Irish Foreign Minister, met in London to discuss ways of improving security in advance of next month's loyalist marches in Northern Ireland.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Welsh attack on Princess

Five Labour MPs have tabled a Commons motion expressing sadness that the Princess of Wales has severed all links with the Principality. Six Welsh charities were among nearly 100 from which she resigned as patron this week. Paul Flynn, MP for Newport West, who says the Princess should renounce her title, said people were baffled that she wished to retain "of Wales" but sever her links.

Painting export delay

The Getty Museum in California has protested at the Government's decision to hold up by a month an export licence application for a £3.5 million Guercino painting, the third extension in six months. Last Monday was meant to be the deadline for an export application for *Erminia finding the wounded Tancréd*. It is believed that the National Galleries of Scotland are negotiating to buy the work.

Solicitors to vote on split

Solicitors in England and Wales are to be balloted over whether their professional body, the Law Society, should be split up. The society's annual meeting mustered the required 20 votes for a postal ballot of the whole profession to see if there is support for separating its regulatory and trade union functions, along the lines of the General Medical Council and the British Medical Association.

Farmer fined for fraud

A former county chairman of the National Farmers' Union has been fined £3,600 for falsifying claims for European Union cattle subsidies. Martin Mann-Healey, 52, was also ordered by Nottingham magistrates to pay legal costs of £5,000 and to compensate the Ministry of Agriculture for more than £800. The accused, of Nuneaton, admitted three charges of dishonestly applying for subsidies.

Air-show plane crashes

Three people were in hospital last night after a rare Bristol Freighter aircraft crashed after an aborted take-off from Enstone, near Oxford, on the way to an air show. All seven passengers and crew were rescued from the wreckage of the 15-seater plane, which fell 50ft. Built in the 1960s to carry cars on Channel routes, it had been booked to appear at an airshow in Filton, near Bristol.

Second lottery draw

Camelot, the operator of the National Lottery, is planning a second weekly draw in the autumn. The plan, which has been submitted to the regulator Oflot, is likely to involve a draw on Wednesday evenings, with smaller jackpots as prize money is split between the two draws. The scheme could boost Camelot's takings by 25 per cent.

Snail rescue obstructed

Police arrested eight protesters yesterday for obstructing work on the removal of rare snails from the route of the Newbury bypass. About 40 demonstrators confronted police with an 8ft snail effigy. Engineers had been digging up sedge and turf for wildlife experts to create a habitat on the River Kennet for the colony of Desmoulin's whorl.

Portillo's defence budget faces cuts

By JILL SHERMAN

FURTHER cuts in Michael Portillo's defence budget were forecast last night as the Cabinet agreed a provisional £268 billion spending ceiling for next year.

New delays over orders worth more than £4 billion, including the £2 billion replacement for Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft, sparked fears that Kenneth Clarke is set on clawing back money on defence. One option being canvassed is the cancellation of the entire £800 million anti-armour weapon programme.

Sources close to the Chancellor last night emphasised that the defence budget would not be protected, despite assurances by John Major.

"The only protected departments are health, education and law and order," one source said. "That does not mean they will get all they want but they will not be cut." Cabinet ministers agreed yesterday to a freeze on the £80 billion public sector pay bill and a bid to trim the £268 billion ceiling by up to £5 billion. Downing Street officials said that the £268 billion figure was an "upper limit", not a target.

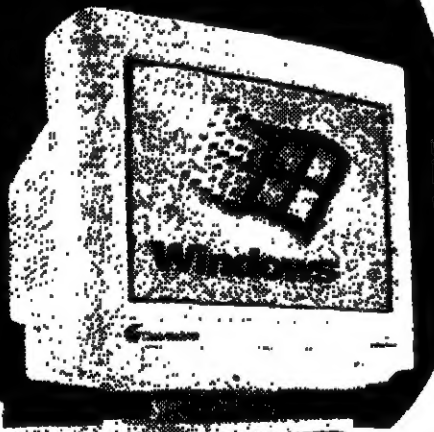
At the meeting Mr Clarke warned colleagues that tough decisions would have to be taken to leave some scope for tax cuts. The key pressure points during this year's public expenditure round will be social security, education and transport, as well as defence.

Navy orders assault ships

The Royal Navy has ordered two amphibious assault ships, *HMS Bulwark* and *HMS Albion*, which will enter service in the next decade.

The £450 million contract is almost a year late because of protracted talks with the ship-builder VSEL of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. The two existing amphibious assault ships, *HMS Fearless* and the mothballed *HMS Intrepid*, are 30 years old.

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Benefactor offers to pay off evicted farm woman's debt

By PAUL WILKINSON

A WOMAN evicted from the remote farm her family has occupied for 500 years could be back home next week.

Freda Fentris-Elterby had to leave her 64-acre estate high on the North Yorkshire moors on Tuesday because of a long-running dispute over her brother George's will. His half share of Forest Lodge Farm, worth about £80,000, was left to outsiders who pressed for the cash.

Press coverage sparked a wave of public sympathy and yesterday Miss Fentris-Elterby's solicitor announced that an anonymous benefactor had offered to buy out the claim of the beneficiaries. James Scott said his 63-year-old client was overwhelmed by the offer. "The investor has indicated that he is prepared to allow Freda to remain on the farm."

Miss Fentris-Elterby has spent all her life on the farm in Danby Dale. She has lived alone since her brother's death in 1989, except for the company of her 68 cattle, two dogs,

17 cats, 20 chickens and a gander called Sid. The farmhouse, parts of which date from the 15th century, has neither electricity nor running water.

Negotiations to allow her to stay on the land, with the collection of animals she regards as friends, finally broke down last week and the bailiffs moved in.

Mr Scott said: "We have to move quickly because the repossession took control of Freda's animals and will sell them off, because it is so expensive to look after them all. She is moved by the offer and the support and generosity she has received from members of the public. I do not think she has ever doubted she would return."

Reports and pictures of her distress at being forced out of her home and of her apparent inability to come to terms with urban life in her cousin's bungalow in Whitby, stirred anger and sympathy among the public. The residents of nearby

Castleton set up the pressure group Reform — Restore Freda's Ownership Rights Movement — and launched a fund at the National Westminster Bank. There were offers of £30,000 each from Yorkshiremen living in London and Plymouth.

Then an American offered up to £100,000 after reading the story on his arrival in London. Mr Scott declined to say if he was the anonymous helper.

However, he did say that the appeal fund had been inundated with cash gifts. Miss Fentris-Elterby's benefactor was happy for her to keep all the donations she received if she wished to do so. "The donations will enable her to continue to feed her cattle next year. They may also permit her to employ someone to help her through the difficult winter times."

Mr Scott said that if the appeal fund raised enough to buy back the benefactor's half of the farm from the estate, then he would gladly sell it to



Freda Fentris-Elterby hopes that next week she will be back with her animals at Forest Lodge Farm, from which she was evicted by bailiffs

her with no added interest.

The dispute over the farm arose after George Fentris-Elterby bequeathed his share to three friends and two hospitals in the Teesside area that treated him during his last days. The hospitals were not pressing for their share in the proceeds of the sale, and two of the friends were dead, but

their beneficiaries and the third friend still wanted their money.

Miss Fentris-Elterby said after hearing of the offer: "I would like to be back there today. The news is great. I thought the original decision to evict me was wicked and should never have happened. Now I want to resume a quiet

life on the farm and never hope to see another solicitor or bailiff again."

Among the many offers of help was £100 from a local charity in the Esk Valley. The trustees voted the money at a hurriedly-arranged meeting yesterday. Part of it will be spent on new clothes for Miss Fentris-Elterby, who is still

wearing the same outfit, apart from a borrowed pair of slippers, that she had on when the bailiffs ordered her to leave.

She came close to breaking down with emotion as she talked about the tide of kindness that has flowed in from wellwishers. "I am ever so grateful. People have been so

kind. I am overwhelmed. I know I will never be able to thank them enough."

Last night she was re-united with her two closest companions, her sheepdogs Judy and Rona. Friends who had been looking after them in the farmyard at Danby Dale felt that they were best back with their mistress.

Botham rejected Imran's offer of letter of regret

By JOANNA BALE

IAN BOTHAM told the High Court yesterday that he had rejected Imran Khan's proposal to settle their dispute with an open letter to *The Times* because he did not regard it as an apology.

As the finishing flourish in his three-day cross-examination, the letter was read by George Carman, QC, to the court. In it, Imran stated that he had never called Botham or Allan Lamb, whom he regarded as "true sportsmen", racist or cheats, and that his comments had been misquoted.

Botham is suing Imran for libel over an article in *The Sun* in which he said that illegal ball-tampering was common among fast bowlers. Botham and Lamb are also suing over an article in *India Today* magazine in which Imran allegedly accused them of racism, of being uneducated and of lacking class and upbringing.

The apology, intended for publication two months after the article in *The Sun* in 1994, went on to offer his regret if any party or their family had been caused distress. It also called for the laws on ball-tampering to be clarified.

Mr Carman turned to Botham and asked him why he had not accepted it. CARMAN: In the interests of the great game of cricket and

in the interests of avoiding some kind of blood battle in these courts and in the interests of good relations between the Pakistan cricketing team and the English team, did you not think that that was a fair and reasonable proposal which you might accept?

BOTHAM: No sir, I did not. CARMAN: Did you not think the letter was written in a spirit of good faith?

BOTHAM: No sir, I do not. I think it's another smoke-screen. I do not think that is an apology, which is all I asked for.

Mr Carman then asked Botham about his anger at comments made by Imran in a review of Botham's autobiography, in which he wished Kathy Botham "all the luck for the remainder of her marriage".

CARMAN: You see it as even more evidence of malice against you by Imran?

BOTHAM: Yes.

Cross-examining Lamb, Mr Carman referred to the article in *India Today*, saying that Imran had written that he had been distressed that such a view had been attributed to him. He had never called Lamb a racist.

CARMAN: What is wrong with that?

LAMB: What is wrong is he said never but he did.

CARMAN: But the article was not written by Imran Khan. It purports to be extracts from an interview by Imran Khan. You know he was saying he had been misquoted.

LAMB: I don't know whether he was misquoted. It was in black and white.

CARMAN: Mr Khan was denying he called you a racist and he had been misquoted. You realise that don't you?

LAMB: If you were called a racist you would be upset too.

He said that as someone who had left South Africa because he hated apartheid and wished to play international cricket he had been "upset and saddened" by the article. The case continues.



Lamb said he was upset at being called racist

Woman attacked at tennis contest

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

SOME of the world's most promising tennis players were being questioned by police yesterday after a violent sex attack on a female member of the Essex club where they have been competing in an international tournament.

The 41-year-old woman was attacked as she left Frinton-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, where she had been drinking in the bar with friends on Wednesday night. As she reached the foyer she was dragged into a dark corner, beaten, robbed and sexually assaulted.

Police believe the attack might have been motivated by revenge after the woman had remonstrated with two youths for throwing drink cans around the club's bar.

The 22-court club is playing host to 300 young players from

all over the world competing in the Frinton Satellite tournament for women and the Reebok Open Tennis Week for men. Visitors and members were questioned yesterday.

Detective Chief Inspector Terry Gardiner, from Clacton police, said the woman's injuries were appalling. "She could not even walk afterwards. She crawled 30 yards into the lighted area before anyone saw her. It was one of the worst cases I have seen."

The victim was taken to Colchester General Hospital and released after treatment, but readmitted yesterday when she realised she had a broken jaw. "She is in a very, very distraught state," Mr Gardiner added.

The attackers are described as white and aged about 18.

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Giant of a man was as big a concern to his family as those he had frightened since his schooldays

Wild, unkempt figure who cast a deadly shadow

By KATE ALDERSON

WHEN Howard Hughes was arrested for Sophie Hook's murder, many in the tight-knit community of Colwyn Bay were in no way surprised.

The 6ft 8in figure was a familiar sight to residents of the North Wales seaside resort, hurtling about on his mountain bike in his scruffy denim at all hours, his hair unwashed and greasy, his rotweiler dog Bryn often at his side — a malevolent presence amid the carefree holiday atmosphere.

Young girls were nervous of walking home alone and Hughes regularly frightened children on the sea front. He had convictions for petty theft and his closest adult friend, Michael Guidi, was a convicted paedophile. But despite complaints from local people and years of observing Hughes, there was little Llandudno police could do.

Hughes was as big a concern to his respectable family as to others. His father Gerald Hughes is an engineer and a prosperous and respected businessman who runs a family contracting and quarrying firm. Howard and his older sisters Karen, Laura and Heather lacked for nothing.

When Howard was born on June 9, 1965, Mr Hughes and his wife Rene were delighted at the arrival of a son. But it soon became clear that all was not well with the boy. He was very tall, reaching 6ft by the age of 11, and doctors diagnosed a chromosomal abnormality called XYY syndrome. He was slow educationally, his progress hampered by dyslexia, but according to a medical report by Gwynedd Health Authority he was not assessed as mentally ill or subnormal.

He was referred to child counsellors for difficult behaviour. Mr Hughes said: "He was emotionally insecure and abhorrent of criticism." His father paid for him to attend a succession of private schools. When one of them, the now

THE MURDERER

defunct Lindsfarne College at Ruarbon, near Wrexham, rejected him without explanation after two terms in desperation Mr Hughes offered the headmaster double the normal fees to keep him on, but was turned down.

One of his contemporaries said: "He was always in fights with people much older than him. Everyone was terrified of him. He was a weirdo — but he wasn't a loner. He always had an entourage of lads around him who were probably terrified of him."

"He was always killing things such as small animals and birds, and he always used to carry a big knife around. From what I heard, his parents were terrified of him as well."

When Hughes was 16 he was sent to St Andrew's Hospital, Northampton, under a Mental Health Act order that Gerald Hughes felt obliged to sign. While he was away, Mr and Mrs Hughes's 20-year marriage failed and the couple divorced in 1986. Last year Mr Hughes married a woman who worked for his company.

When Hughes was released from hospital after a year he lived rough before returning to live with his mother. Personal hygiene problems cast him adrift from others. For weeks he would wear the same clothes. His teeth had fallen out because he never brushed them. His diet consisted of 20 Mars bars a day, because he could bite on nothing hard, and five litres of cola.

Hughes acquired 17 convictions over 19 years, mostly for theft and burglary. Over the years, allegations of his threatening behaviour towards children became increasingly serious. In 1981, when he was 16, he half-strangled a seven-year-old boy, Graham Lloyd, and escaped with a two-year supervision order.

His victim had been lured into a half-demolished house.

"He picked me off the ground and threw me down — he was a very strong man," Mr Lloyd, now a student in Nottingham, said. "He wound up astride me with both hands around my neck." Mr Lloyd started to black out and pretended to be dead until Hughes left.

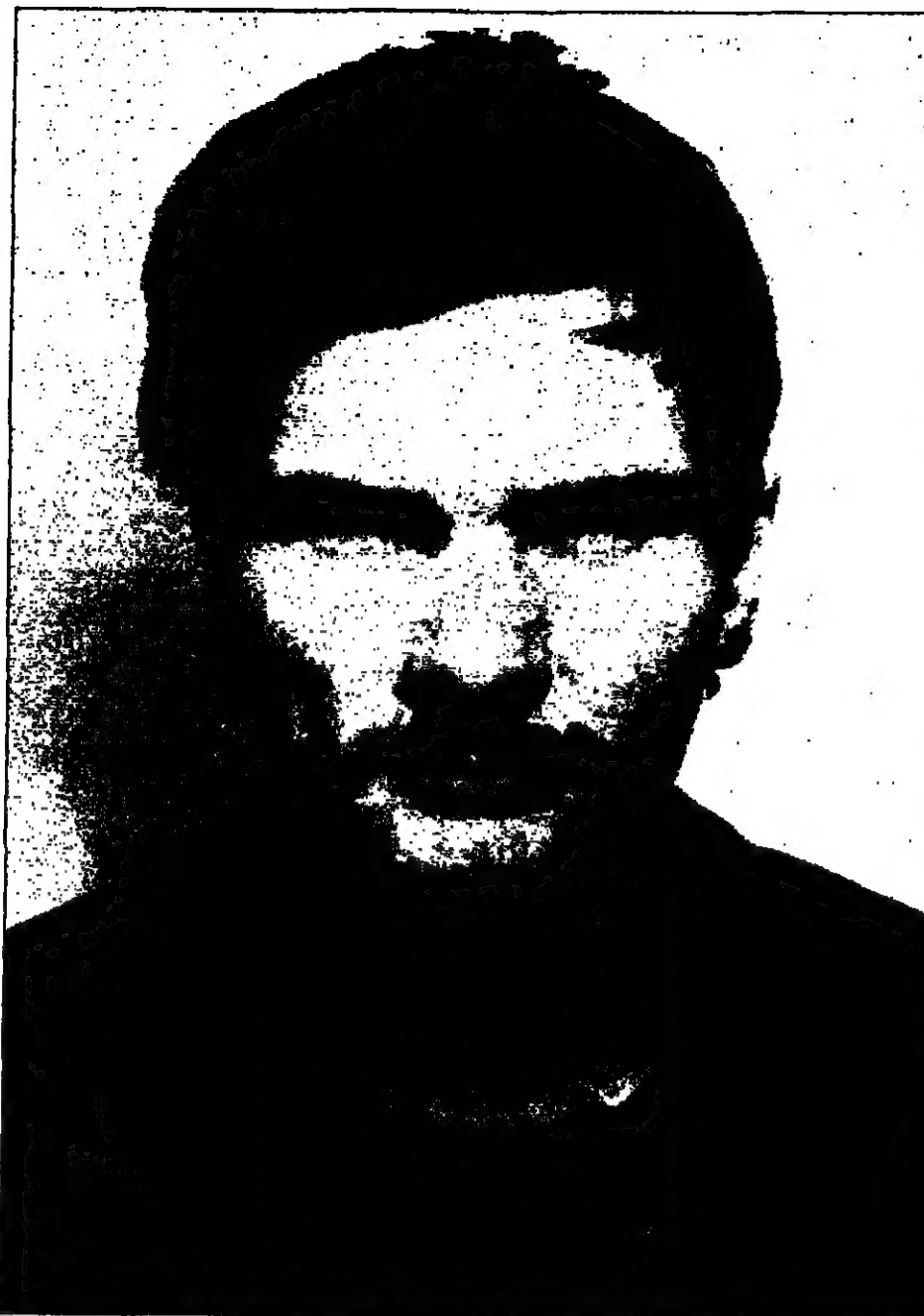
Lorraine Haste, who lived next door to the Hughes family home, said: "He would shout abuse when I was in the garden, disgusting things. I got so bad we built an 8ft fence at the bottom of the garden to keep him out and put tall gates at the front of the garden to stop him coming in the front way. It was like living next to a wild, unpredictable animal."

The garden adjoining the back of Hughes's home belongs to Liz Kelly, who became afraid to let her six children, aged between six and 17, play near the fence. Once her 11-year-old daughter and a friend were planning to sleep in their summerhouse. The girls were in the chalet, chatting and giggling, when Hughes banged on the walls shouting and swearing. The girls ran indoors.

In 1986 he was accused of indecently assaulting a nine-year-old girl but her parents were unwilling for the case to go ahead. In 1990 he was accused of indecently assaulting two girls, aged five and three, at Llandudno. The case was dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service because of the girls' young age.

After Hughes's arrest for Sophie's murder, police found pornographic equipment and literature at his home, much of it relating to children. He would cut out pictures of children naked or in their underwear.

He shared the secret of his obsession with young girls with Guidi, 32, who was befriended by Hughes when he was 13 and who stayed with him and his mother for three months after coming out of prison. Guidi said Hughes confided to him a desire to have sex with a girl aged four or five.



Hughes scared neighbours and brought death to nearby Llandudno, where Sophie returned with her family to visit her cousins' home



Killing 'could not have been prevented'

THE detective in charge of the murder inquiry said yesterday that he was satisfied that there was nothing the police could have done that would have stopped Howard Hughes committing the crime.

Detective Superintendent Eric Jones of North Wales Police said that Hughes had been closely watched since 1981, but added: "I am quite happy in my own mind that everything that could have been done was done."

He said the police did receive a great number of

complaints after Hughes had been arrested for Sophie Hook's murder. "I would not like to speculate as to whether, had those people come forward earlier, he could have been arrested and taken before the courts. It can be very, very frustrating at times."

He said that Hughes had been very astute and sharp during his interviews, and confirmed that police already had their own intelligence on him. "You will, no doubt, now know that Howard Hughes did make complaints of police harassment because of the

THE POLICE

close attention that was being paid to him."

He pointed out that there were a considerable number of convictions against Hughes since 1981, adding: "There are other matters that we could not proceed upon because of the lack of evidence."

Mr Jones was asked about incidents during the previous three years in which teenagers and younger children had made allegations of inde-

cency against Hughes. He said: "We must have evidence and corroborative evidence. If those elements are missing we cannot act. He was interviewed after all those approaches to children."

"In some cases the parents did not want us to continue with complaints. In one case it was adjudged that there was insufficient evidence to take before the court."

Mr Jones, who led a team of 120 police officers in the investigation, said: "We are very pleased to have convicted Howard Hughes ... how-

ever, there is no victory here for anyone. Nothing we say or do will bring back that little girl."

"The sad thing about this is that the Hook family will have to live with this forever and nothing can be done to help them."

Mr Jones paid a special tribute to Hughes's father, Gerald, who came forward to give evidence of his son's private confession to Sophie's murder as he was being held in a police cell. "It was a very brave thing for him to do and it was the right thing."

'The one time she needed us most we were not there'

By KATE ALDERSON

JULIE HOOK said of her daughter Sophie: "No child could ever have received or given more love."

Yet after Howard Hughes broke through the curtain of love and protection that surrounded the child, her parents tortured themselves with the thought that they were not with her at the moment she needed them most.

Mrs Hook, 35, a part-time teacher, spoke of the guilt that consumed her and her husband Christopher, 38, an advertising sales executive. "We both feel very, very sorry that the one time she needed us most we were simply not there. My mother feels guilty for buying the tent. Danny [Sophie's uncle] feels so guilty because he didn't sleep in the tent with them, so it isn't just us feeling guilty. That feeling will never go away."

Mr and Mrs Hook had moved with their children from Llandudno to the village of Great Budworth, 70 miles away in Cheshire, 18 months before the murder. They have two other daughters, Jemma, 9, and Ellie, 21 months, and a son, Joseph, 5.

Neighbours spoke of a warm, happy family. Sophie was the most extrovert of the children. "She was a bubbly and vivacious girl, a real Shirley Temple character with her brown curly hair and round face," one neighbour recalled.

The family kept in close touch with Mrs Hook's sister, Fiona, and her husband, Danny Jones. The Joneses also had four young children, who would regularly be visited by their cousins for "sleep-overs".

That Saturday, Sophie's cousin was celebrating his ninth birthday, and Mrs Hook brought her children to join in the fun at a garden party and barbecue.

Jones's £200,000 home in Llandudno has a large back garden, shielded from the overgrown bridle path to the rear by a hedge and a gate. It was the perfect spot for a carefree afternoon in the paddling pool and playing in the tent that Pearl and Paul Roberts had bought as a birthday present for their grandson.



Christopher and Julie Hook at Sophie's funeral with their children Jemma, Ellie and Joseph

The boy was to tell police that it had been his idea to camp out, to test his new tent and the sleeping bag Sophie had bought him. When Mrs Hook left, no decision had been taken about whether the children would be allowed to stay out, but it was a matter about which she would have had no more qualms than her sister and brother-in-law.

To the children it would seem like a big adventure, but to camp in this apparently secure garden would have caused the most careful parent little concern.

"I knew it was a possibility, and I felt fine about that," Mrs Hook said later. "I kissed them goodbye and said, 'I'll see you tomorrow.'"

She could not have known that Hughes had spent much of the afternoon eavesdropping from the pathway, listen-

ing to the children's excited chatter about their camping adventure.

Mrs Hook took one of the Jones children and two of her own back to Cheshire. The families planned to meet the next day in Chester, when the holiday weekend would be completed with an outing to the new Batman film.

Mr Jones returned from work that evening to find the party in full swing. He lit the barbecue and built the children a bonfire near the entrance to the tent.

Later Sophie, her elder sister and two of the Jones boys settled down in the tent. Sophie's nine-year-old cousin recalled: "Daddy did up the tent and then he went round the back and lifted the tent to try to scare us. But we weren't scared. I told them it was my dad." After Mr Jones went into

the house, the children played games and had a midnight feast. But soon after midnight, they went to find Mr Jones. They had been telling each other stories about the ghosts that they said haunted the old tramlines criss-crossing the field beyond the bridle path and the younger boy had become upset. He stayed in the house but the others returned to the tent, where they were settled quietly when Mr Jones made his last check at 12.45am.

In the morning, when the two Jones children awoke, they knew at once that something was wrong. Sophie was missing, and this was no game of hide-and-seek. Mr and Mrs Jones made a swift search of the area and called the police. A child's naked body had already been found on the beach a few hundred yards away, and it was not long before the family's fears were confirmed.

In the days of anguish that followed, their dignity and courage were apparent. Mr and Mrs Hook made two television appeals for help to find their daughter's killer.

Mrs Hook told how Sophie's elder sister, Jemma, was suffering most. "She is totally and utterly distraught. We are encouraging her to talk about Sophie, about things we have done recently. She is saying all the things I say — not to her — such as, 'I want to go to heaven to be with Sophie.'"

"I protected my children so much. They were not allowed to cross the road on their own. They were never allowed to go anywhere on their own. If not me, there was always someone very close. If Sophie fell off her bike, I was always there to rub her knee and say, 'It's all right, honey.'"

At Sophie's funeral a single bell tolled. Mr and Mrs Hook wanted the service to celebrate their daughter's life, and their other children were dressed in bright clothes and carried posies of wild flowers.

Jemma wrote a poem which was handed to mourners: "Sophie, my precious little sister, I am missing you dearly ... All the happy times I spent with you and will spend with you. I enjoyed and will enjoy."

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Thousands dying as bacteria become immune to drugs

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

THE growing number of bacteria which cannot be treated with any existing antibiotic may cause a global health crisis, an international group of scientists said yesterday.

Diseases which could have been cured a decade ago are now killing thousands of people worldwide because new strains have developed multidrug resistance. For millions more patients, standard treatments are failing to work as resistance grows. But no new antibiotics are expected this decade and few early in the 21st century.

A three-day symposium on antibiotic resistance, organised by the CIBA foundation, an independent scientific charity, in London, was attended by 25 scientists from nine countries. They heard that the over-use of antibiotics worldwide has irretrievably altered

the microbiological environment.

Professor Julian Davies of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, said: "Over the last 50 years, we have been involved in an incredible experiment. Tens of billions of pounds of antibiotics have been released on this planet. The globe is bathed in a dilute solution of antibiotics. You might expect all microbes would have been killed. But they have not been killed, they have become resistant."

Professor Stuart Levy, director of the centre for drug resistance at Tufts University, Boston, and chairman of the symposium, said: "Multi-drug-resistant bacteria are increasing, patients are failing therapy and some are dying. That would have been unheard of ten years or even five years ago in some cases. The

fact that we are losing any patients with multidrug-resistant disease who would have been saved a few years ago shows we are facing a crisis."

In the United States, 8 to 12 per cent of pneumococcus bacteria, which cause two million cases of pneumonia, 7½ million ear infections and 3,000 cases of meningitis each year, are multidrug-resistant and patients have to be given a powerful antibiotic vancomycin. "We are one antibiotic short of being unable to treat them," Professor Levy said.

Dr Mitchell Cohen, director of the division of bacterial diseases at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, said there had been a breakdown in public health measures. "We have become complacent about infectious diseases. In 1969, the US Surgeon General said we could close the book on infectious disease but as recent events have shown, that was premature."

Potential killers such as tuberculosis, pneumonia and septicemia have made a comeback. "Infectious diseases have a habit of emerging and re-emerging and we have to be prepared," he said.

The problem was less serious in Britain but would grow unless measures to prevent it were taken now, the scientists said. They appealed for more responsible use of antibiotics.

"Physicians often inappropriately prescribe antibiotics and people stockpile them and do not complete prescribed courses, all helping bacteria to learn how to survive. Antibiotic misuse accounts for more than half all the antibiotics prescribed in the developed world," the scientists said.

Scientists solve puzzle of obesity hormone

A MYSTERY surrounding a hormone that could hold the key to obesity has been solved by scientists (Jeremy Laurance writes). Researchers had been puzzled by the action of leptin, a protein made by fat cells which carries messages to the brain about the body's fat levels and tells it to stop eating.

The hormone, and the gene called ob that makes it, were discovered in December 1994. In mice, defective production of leptin — from the Greek word *leptos* meaning thin — results in gross obesity. Studies of human beings, however, have shown that obese

people have high levels of leptin in their blood rather than the expected low level, suggesting that the message to the brain is not getting through.

Now scientists at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, have found that there may be a limit to the rate at which leptin can travel from the blood into the brain and that this rate may be lower in obese individuals, explaining why they overeat.

It may be necessary to find some other signal that will activate the brain's weight-control centres, the researchers report in *The Lancet*.

Baby given meningitis by pet lizard

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

DOCTORS have called on the Government to issue health warnings of the risks to young children from pet reptiles after a baby girl was given meningitis by a lizard.

Guy Makin, registrar in paediatrics at the Children's Hospital (Sheffield), said: "People need to be made aware of the dangers of keeping these types of animals as pets, particularly if they have young families." The six-week-old girl was referred to the hospital six months ago with fever and nausea, which was diagnosed as meningitis. She recovered after being given antibiotics.

The girl had been infected with a strain of salmonella — *Salmonella duban* — associated with reptiles and rarely found in humans, which she is believed to have caught from droppings from the family's pet monitor lizard. Dr Makin said salmonella normally infected only the bowel, but in the very young and elderly it could get into the bloodstream and the membrane around the brain.

Parents warned over soya milk

By JEREMY LAURANCE

PARENTS who choose to give their babies soya-based infant formula milk should seek medical advice about the risks, the Government said yesterday.

A committee of independent scientists appointed by the Health Department has said that phytoestrogens found in soya-based infant formulae can, in certain situations, behave like a very weak form of oestrogen, the female hormone. In animals this has caused fertility problems. The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment says there is no evidence of damaging effects in humans.

Phytoestrogens are a naturally occurring plant chemical found in peas and green beans as well as soya beans. Japanese and Chinese people who eat large quantities of soya show no sign of ill effects.

However, on the basis of the animal studies, the Government is urging caution. In laboratory studies, phytoestrogens have caused male

characteristics in females and the feminisation of males. Sheep grazing on clover containing high concentrations of the chemical have suffered an infertility syndrome.

About 1 per cent of babies are fed soya-based infant formulae, most on medical advice because they are allergic to cows' milk. The committee says these children should continue to be given it.

A small number of vegans and others who wish to avoid cows' milk products choose to feed their babies the soya-based version. These are advised to consult their GP or health visitor so they are aware of the risks.

Last month the Food Advisory Committee recommended that, as a precaution, baby-food manufacturers should look at how to reduce phytoestrogen levels in their products.

The concern over phytoestrogens is separate to that relating to another oestrogen-like chemical found in some baby milk in the form of phthalates which have also been linked to infertility.



Soldiers from the Parachute Regiment searching the area yesterday close to the place where Mrs Russell and her daughter were murdered

Police seek car driver in double killing

By RICHARD DUCE

DETECTIVES investigating the murders of Lin Russell and her six-year-old daughter yesterday issued a likeness of the man who could be their killer.

The E-fit picture is based on a further sighting of a fair-haired man acting suspiciously near the spot in rural Kent where Mrs Russell, the wife of a biologist, and her daughter Megan were bludgeoned to death with a hammer over a week ago. Dr Shaun Russell yesterday told his daughter Josephine, 9, who survived the attack, that Megan and Mrs Russell had been killed.

"She has now been told that her mother and sister are dead and we think she can comprehend that because of signs she

showed when the news was broken to her," Detective Chief Inspector David Stevens said.

Josephine is now doing brilliantly. It is amazing to think that last week she was at death's door. She cannot talk, but doctors hope she will regain her speech and we are still hoping she will be able to provide us with some clues."

The latest description of the suspect is based on the evidence of a woman who was stopped at a police roadblock and remembered seeing the driver of a beige car who braked suddenly at a junction close to the murder scene in Chilenden on Tuesday afternoon last week. Her description tallies with that of another witness who saw an agitated man dump a white string bag in a hedge. The bag was

later found to contain items of clothing belonging to the Russell family.

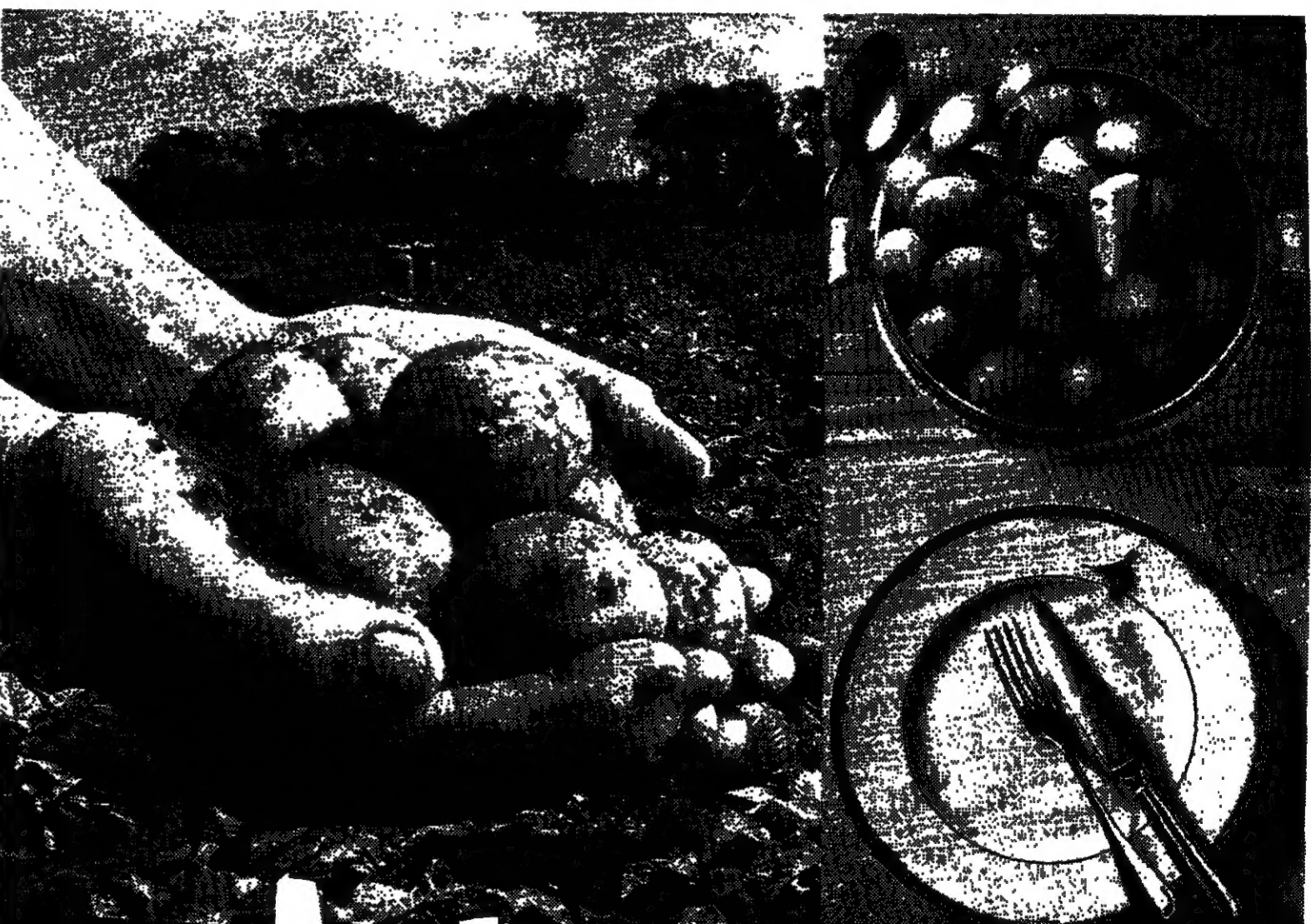
Mr Stevens said the latest witness believed the beige car had distinctive red anti-static strips hanging from the back. "This man could certainly be the perpetrator. If he is not, we would ask the driver to come forward as he must be an extremely important witness."

The man is in his 20s or 30s, with short light-coloured hair with a fringe. He has fair skin and was wearing a red T-shirt.

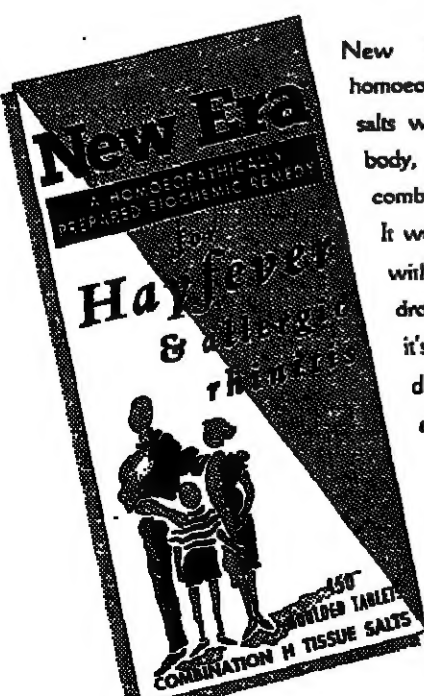
Josephine suffered multiple skull fractures in the attack and doctors have told Dr Russell, 44, that she may have permanent speech and mobility difficulties. The killer struck as Mrs Russell, 45, was walking the children home from the neighbouring village of Goodnestone.



Likeness: police want to question this man



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Caesar's invasion fleet sought by sonar in the Solent's mud

By Nick Nuttall,
Russell Jenkins
and Norman Hammond

A SEARCH for ancient wrecks, including the remains of Julius Caesar's invasion fleet, has been launched by scientists using advanced sonar able to "peer" through mud, it was disclosed yesterday.

Researchers from Southampton University and the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology are mapping the sea bed in the Solent, a major seaway since primitive times. Professor David Peacock, an archaeologist at the university, said yesterday that the sonar, called Chirps, had already discovered a structure under mud in Langstone Harbour, Hampshire.

The find is in the same area where members of another team — who helped to find Henry VIII's flagship the *Mary Rose* 30 years ago — announced this week that they had discovered what they believed to be a Roman ship up to 15 metres long, a mile off Hayling Island. They were using a more primitive sonar that can identify shapes in the mud.

The *Mary Rose* diving team is hoping to revisit the wreck next month to get a chunk of



Don Bullivant with an artefact from near the wreck

wood for carbon dating. A small piece has been subject to tree-ring dating but Don Bullivant, from Waterlooville, Hampshire, one of the divers, said that the first sample was of poor quality. It has confirmed only that the wood is more than 500 years old and not of British origin.

During Caesar's invasion of Britain, some of his ships were lost in a storm, and some could have been blown toward the Solent. Professor Peacock said: "The chances of finding one of these would be remarkable."

The armada must have been an awesome sight to Britons watching on July 8,

54BC, close to the spot where Deal stands today. The Roman general brought with him a formidable maritime fighting machine of 800 ships, including 600 specially constructed transport ships, 28 warships and a large number of privateers carrying five legions of infantry and 2,000 cavalrymen.

It is not known which ship Caesar chose to sail on, but it is likely to have been specially constructed, largely by conscript labour, near Boulogne, his point of departure two days before. Powered by both sail and oar, the ships were much wider and lower in the beam than similar vessels of

the time, to ease beaching. It was not until AD43 that a maritime Roman invasion force brought conquerors to stay. Emperor Claudius sent an army of four legions of infantry and cavalry estimated at 40,000 men. The force, designed to silence Claudius's critics, even boasted elephants.

The *Classis Britannica*, the Roman British fleet, dates from the end of the first century. A naval fleet is known to have aided Agricola's military push up the east of Scotland as far as the Tay, in northeast Fife, in 81AD. Ships were used to convey supplies.

Archaeological finds have established that the naval fleet enjoyed a substantial presence in the South of England. Tiles with the names of *Classis Britannica* have been found in Sussex showing a large amount of naval activity off the south coast. If the Hayling Island find proves to be of Roman date, it will add to the scanty remains of actual ships that have survived from antiquity.

Commander Brian Sparks, of the Trust for Maritime Archaeology, said that the Solent was a fascinating region of sea bed to study. It was once an estuary with primitive Bronze Age and

earlier settlements along its banks. He said: "About 10,000 years ago, there was an inundation of the sea between the Needles and Poole Harbour which breached the river system and formed the Solent as we know it."

There was a further inundation of sea water into the area in the 13th and 14th centuries around Hayling Island. Since Roman times, sea levels have risen by about three metres, further flooding the land. So it is believed that the area is littered with wooden objects, including wrecks, jetties, harbours and primitive buildings.

Professor Peacock said: "We are looking at the Solent because it is one of the richest areas for ancient wrecks, as it was a major seaway to Britain. But we hope it will also be a buried landscape with all sorts of items preserved because of the inundation of water."

Francis Grew, of the Museum of London, pointed out that a Roman wreck was found on reclaimed land near Blackfriars, at the mouth of the Fleet. He added: "Any discovery of a Roman wreck is important because so little archaeological evidence exists."

Leading article, page 19



They came, they saw, they sank: a sea-going Roman ship with a barge alongside

Dishes that set barbecues alight

By DIANA THORP

STEAKS are not the only dish to be enjoyed on a barbecue. Fish filets can be wrapped in foil while chicken filets can be made into kebabs and grilled.

Large prawns can be brushed with olive oil and grilled. Promotions include:

Asda: "healthy choice" pork range reduced by 50p a kg, rump steak £7.99 kg, two pack chicken breast filets £2.48 for 298g, breaded haddock filets £2.99 for 600g, peppers £1.49 for four, cauliflower 39p each.

Budgens: fresh chickens 1.5kg £3.29 each, Arkadia feta cheese

cubes in oil £1.29 for 250g, nectarines £1.25 a punnet, soft serve raspberry ripple ice cream £1.19 2ltr.

Co-op: pork ribs in a Mexican style marinade £1.69 for 425g, fresh part-boned chicken breasts £2.99 for 600g, Birds Eye haddock fish fingers 79p.

Harrods: wild smoked Scottish salmon £4.99 for 100g, fresh lobsters £9 for one, two for £17, York ham on the bone £1.70 for 100g.

Iceland: sirloin steaks £3.97 for 261g, Birds Eye southern fried chicken £2.99 for six portions, breaded scampi £1.99 for 400g, seafood selection £2.49 for 366g.

Mark & Spencer: butter-basted boneless turkey breast joint £3.99 for 510g, reduced

fat hounous, reduced fat taramasalata and tzatziki 99p for 283g.

Morrisons: English lamb chops £2.49 lb, super roaster chickens £3.99 each, large fresh salmon £1.79 lb, salmon steaks £2.09 lb, Weight Watchers vegetable lasagne 99p for 320g.

Safeway: rump steak £7.79 for 383g, gammon steak smoked £1.39 or unsmoked £1.29 for 255g, chicken stir fry £2.89 for 454g, carrots 35p lb, strawberry pavlova

£1.79 for 6 portions.

Sainsbury's: fillet steak £15.19 kg, fresh pork boneless shoulder joint £2.99 kg, fresh boneless chicken breast £3.95 for four, pre-packed salmon steaks £7.50 kg, iceberg lettuce 32p each.

Somerfield: fresh lamb chops £9.87 kg, duck breast portions £4.99 kg, smoked cod fillet £1.57 lb, seafood cocktail £1.49 for 200g.

Tesco: topside/silverside top rump joint £4.39 kg, pork chops £4.75 kg, fresh skinless four chicken breast fillets £4.95 for 540g, St Peters fish (Tilapia) £1.99 lb.

Waitrose: farmhouse ground veal 99p for 340g, fresh chicken £5.49 for 2.5kg, smoked haddock filets £2.95 lb, Duke of York new potatoes 75p for 1.5kg.

WEEKEND SHOPPING

Irish back Scots in French whisky war

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Scots and the Irish have joined forces to defend whisky against a weaker, cheaper imitation from France. The Irish Government is backing the Scotch Whisky Association in the European Court in an attempt to stop the French from selling a blended whisky spirit as the genuine article.

The French version, produced by La Martiniquaise, is 30 per cent alcohol. The European Union minimum for the genuine article is 40 per cent. The French drink costs about £1 less because the lower alcohol content means less duty and tax. Richard

Burrows, chairman and managing director of Irish Distillers, claims the French are misleading customers.

"They call their product 'whisky spirit', and that is the nub of the problem which the court is seeking to address. They present it in exactly the same shape and size as regular Scotch and Irish."

Campbell Evans, of the Scotch Whisky Association, welcomed the Irish decision to back their challenge. "France is a very important market for Scotland. We have to protect it as the French protect champagne producers."

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Labour leaders split over call to end Tube strike

By Jill Sherman and Jonathan Prynn

THE Labour leadership was split yesterday over Tony Blair's demand for London Tube workers to call off their strike.

John Prescott, the deputy party leader, was furious about the tough line taken by his Shadow Cabinet colleague David Blunkett on Wednesday, which had been agreed with Mr Blair. Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, also appeared unhappy about the change of position when he gave a radio interview yesterday.

In the Commons John Major and his MPs exploited the disagreement. The Prime Minister said: "Mr Blunkett said the strikers should go to arbitration and that self-evidently must be right. I hope we will hear the same call from the Shadow Transport Secretary (Clare Short) and the deputy leader (Mr Prescott), himself sponsored by one of the striking unions."

Mr Prescott, who is sponsored by the RMT, told Mr

Blair early on Wednesday that he opposed the statement that the strike was "inappropriate" and that the parties should go to binding arbitration.

Last night Mr Prescott denied any rift with Mr Blair, but he was still said to be very angry about the decision.

The leftwinger Ken Livingstone, MP for Brent East, insisted that Mr Prescott was so furious he was "having to be scraped off the wall". Michael Meacher, the Shadow Employment Minister, was also said to be angered by the stance against the strikers, the toughest taken by the party in recent memory.

Mr Cook, too, the Shadow Cabinet line, but only just. Asked whether he supported Mr Blair's view on the Tube strike, he said: "Mr Blair has made his position perfectly clear. When pressed, he added: 'As a member of the Shadow Cabinet I share collective responsibility for anything any of us say.'"

Frontbenchers were later

told not to give radio or television interviews on the strike. Donald Dewar, the Chief Whip, was said to be unhappy with Mr Cook's comments.

Mr Blair's aides took a step further and said that the Labour leadership condemned the strike. They emphasised again that the two sides should go to arbitration but said that they were not suggesting compulsory arbitration for all strikes. One aide said the Post Office strike was a different matter and Labour did not wish to get involved.

Union leaders dismissed Mr Blair's calls for binding arbitration in the dispute as "pointless" because London Transport had already made pledges to its drivers that it was now trying to renege on.

Lew Adams, the general secretary of the Aslef union, said: "We have honoured our part of that agreement and the dispute is about the fact that London Underground have not honoured theirs."

More than 2,000 Tube drivers

from the Aslef and RMT unions are staging a series of one-day strikes in support of a demand for a one-hour cut in the working week. Much of central London ground to a halt yesterday morning as hundreds of thousands of commuters struggled to beat what was the nearest to a total shutdown of the Tube for seven years.

Motorists organisations said many drivers going to work were still trapped in traffic at 11am, three or more hours after leaving home. Gavin McWhirter of AA Roadwatch said: "Despite an early start — the rush hour began as early as 5.30am — millions of would-be travellers faced major delays on major routes, many of which resembled giant car parks."

The worst tailbacks were seen on the M25, M1, M3, M4, M23, A4 and A3, with traffic also locked solid on major inner-London routes such as Bayswater Road and Oxford Street.



Peers to challenge authority of MPs

By James Landale

THE House of Lords will launch a rare challenge to the authority of the Commons next week with a new assault on the Government's immigration legislation.

An alliance of Opposition peers and bishops will try to reverse a decision by MPs this week to reject a Lords amendment to the Asylum and Immigration Bill.

The move, known in Westminster as playing legislative "ping pong", tends to occur only once or twice every decade. The Lords accept most Commons amendments on the ground that MPs have an electoral mandate.

The Lords amendment, introduced by Labour with the support of many Tories, would have given asylum seekers a three-day "grace period" after their arrival in which to claim refugee status and avoid becoming ineligible for welfare benefits.

The Opposition will now table a new amendment to the Bill when it goes back to the Lords on Monday. Many peers fear that asylum seekers could be left destitute.

The last time the Lords "pinged" legislation was in 1993. Under the procedure, both Houses "ping pong" the Bill back to each other until neither is prepared to alter its amendments. The Bill then falls and after a delay of a year the Government has to force it through the Lords by invoking the Parliament Act.

Dozens of Tory associations found lacking as party raises £1.4m

By Andrew Pierce

DONATIONS from Tory supporters in the constituencies have risen sharply as the general election nears but the total is still way below the level enjoyed during Margaret Thatcher's leadership.

Payments to Conservative Central Office by local associations

totalled £1.1 million last financial year, which was £33,000 down on the previous year, but a further £300,000 was sent to the Constituents' Seats Club. The quota target was almost £3 million.

The Tory party, whose finances are bolstered by more than £3 million of loans from the constituencies, is planning an appeal to the

wealthiest associations. Party treasurers hope to convert the loans, which can be recalled at any time, into donations to ensure a big fighting fund for the election.

For the fourth year running dozens of associations, badly affected by falling membership, have failed to contribute a penny to Conservative Central Office. Others

sent amounts of less than £20. One of the biggest embarrassments was the failure of Peterborough, the constituency association of Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, to send anything.

Other conspicuous non-contributors included Old Bexley and Sidcup, Sir Edward Heath's association, and Reigate, Sir George

Gardiner's association, which is one of the wealthiest.

Witney, where the former Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd is MP, made no contribution, nor did Teresa Gorman's Billericay association, Ilford North, where the MP is Vivian Bendall, sent £4.

The best performance was by Aylesbury Conservatives, whose

MP David Lidington is parliamentary aide to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary. They were set a £9,000 target but sent £84,000.

The financial year for the Tories ended with the party's overdraft down to just over £2 million compared with £11.4 million at the end of 1994-95 and almost £20 million the year before.

Analysis confirms Tories' plight

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

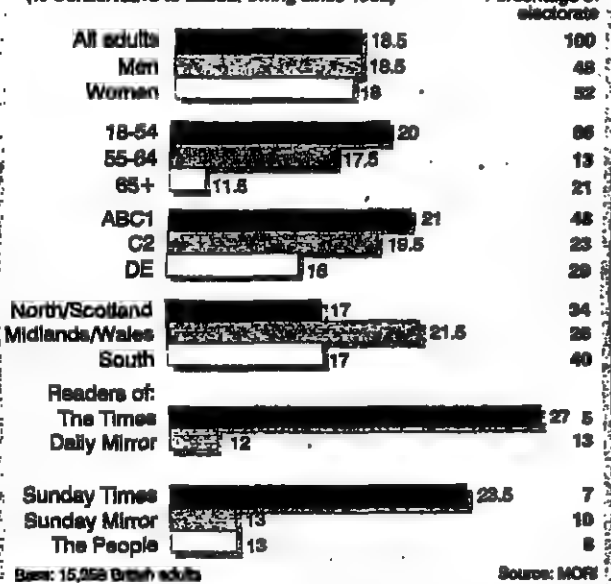
THE Tories' "New Labour, New Danger" strategy is aimed at rebuilding their core vote — and not before time to judge by the latest MORI aggregate. This consists of all 15,399 people interviewed by MORI over the April-to-June period. This analysis confirms not only that the Tories have much further to climb than at the same stage of the last three Parliaments, but also shows that their greatest problems are with their traditional supporters.

Despite a sharp rise in Tory support in June, the party's average rating for the quarter was 27 per cent, broadly the same as over the past year. But in early summer 1991 the

WHO'S SWUNG THE MOST?

Q How would you vote if there was a general election tomorrow?

(% Conservative to Labour swing since 1992)



Tories were on 39 per cent, against the 43 per cent they won in the 1992 election.

As worrying for the Tories' is their weakness in previous strongholds. There has been a swing of 21 per cent from

Tories to Labour since 1992 among the middle classes, now 48 per cent of the electorate. This compares with an 18.5 per cent swing among the public generally. There has been an above-average swing among readers of newspapers which traditionally back the Tories. This has been highest of all, at 27 per cent, among readers of *The Times*, though this also reflects the different readership following the doubling in circulation since 1993.

The swing has been above average among 18 to 54-year-olds, those living in the East Midlands, East Anglia and the South West, people with mortgages, and in full-time work. All that reinforces the Tory decision to try to frighten these people back to the fold by warning them of the alleged dangers of higher taxes, higher interest rates and the like under Labour.

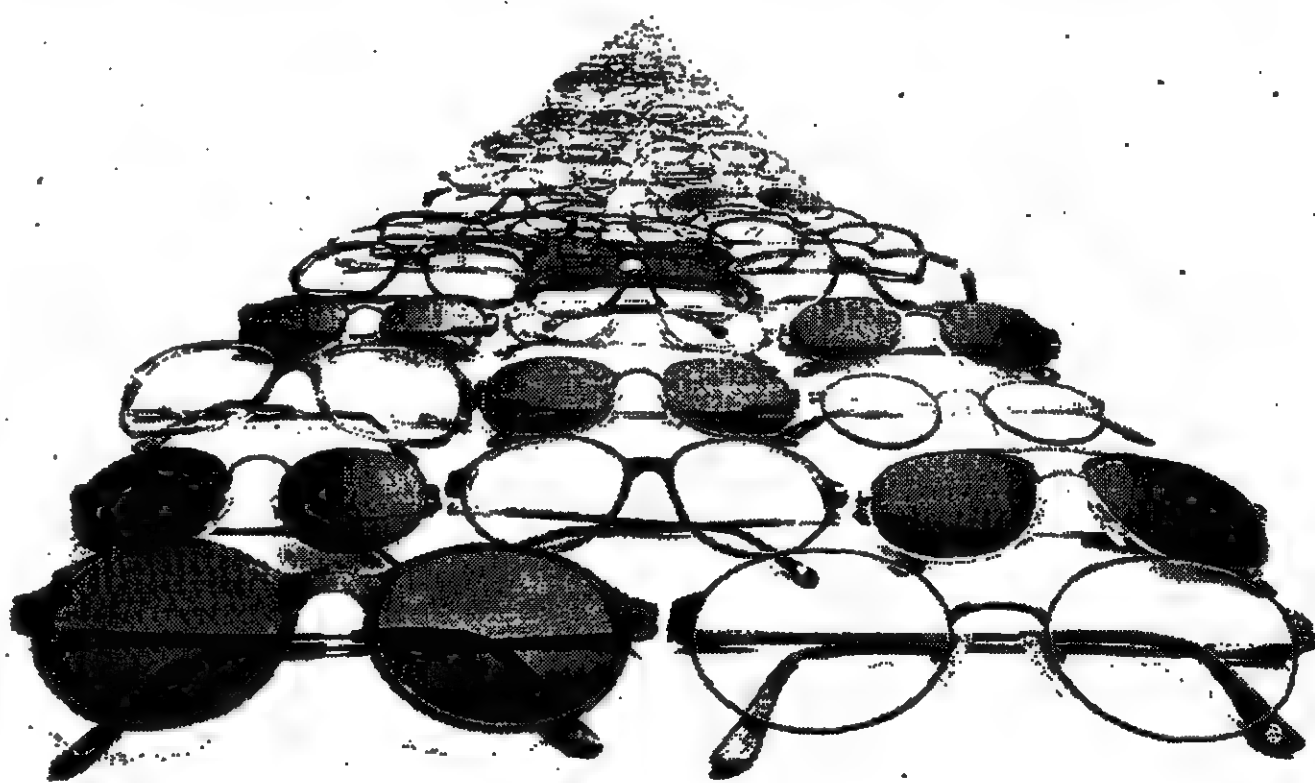
Other lessons are drawn out by Robert Worcester of MORI in the latest *British Public Opinion* newsletter. His guess, also mine, is that the election will be on May 1. As he notes: "MORI's latest polls show that the 'localball' feel-good factor' lasted only a few days and that the Economic Optimism Index, the 'economic feel-good factor', has not done much to help the Tory share either." He forecasts that Labour will have an overall majority of about 40 following the lowest turnout since the war as a result of high abstentions by former Tories, a Liberal Democrat resurgence to win 35 to 40 seats, and voters "cherry-picking" new Labour candidates over old-style socialists. I am less sure about the latter point, but most ominous for the Tories is his emphasis on the importance of party image — in particular, whether voters think a party is united and capable of governing, or split and preoccupied with infighting. That is where the public's view of Labour and the Tories has been reversed since 1992.

PETER RIDDELL

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: debates on science policy and human genetics; custody privatisation. The House of Lords is not sitting.

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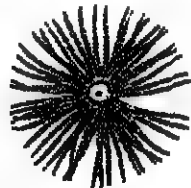
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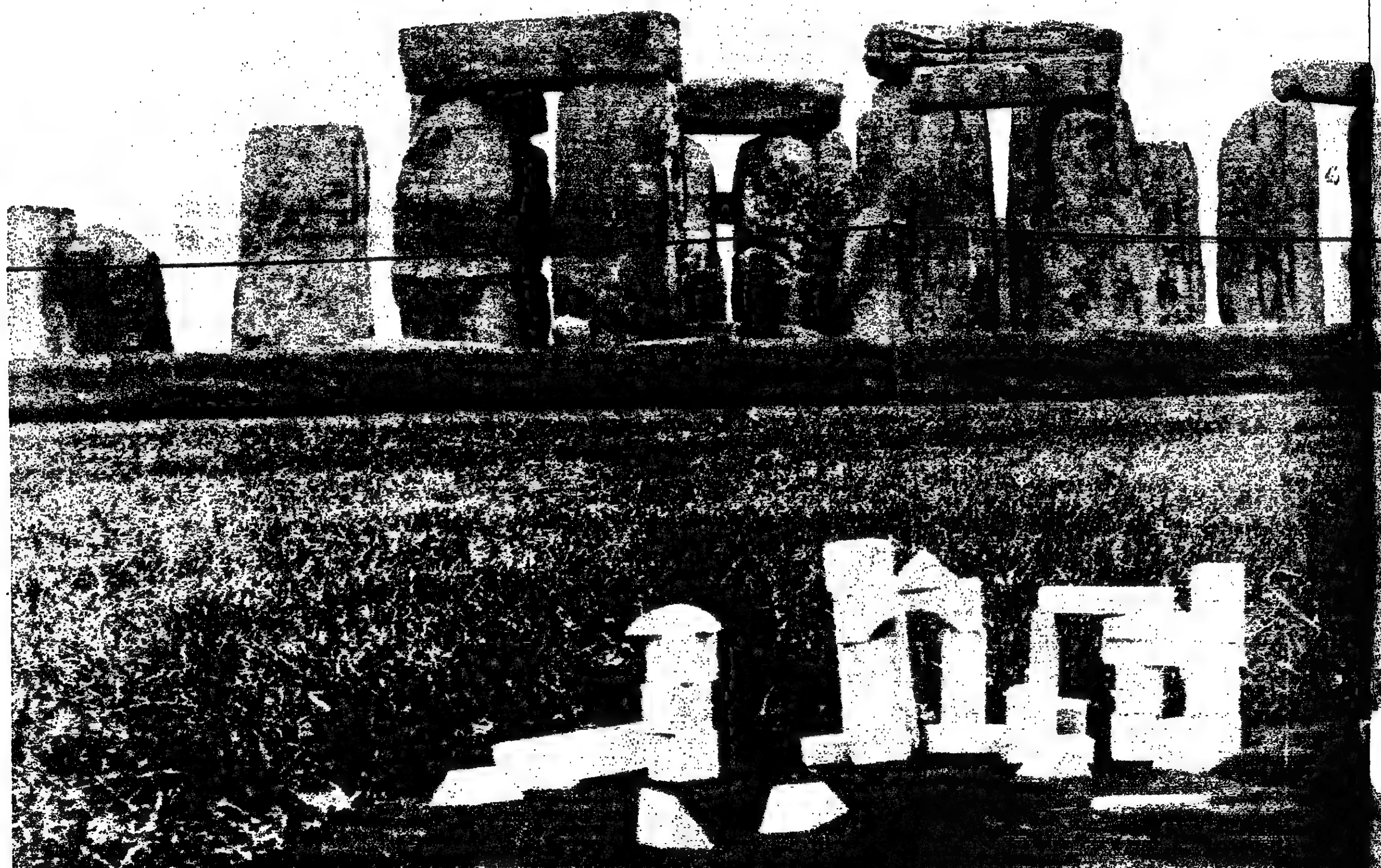
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KGB opts for hard sell of its greatest moments on CD

FROM OWEN MATTHEWS IN MOSCOW

THE KGB has broken a 70-year code of silence with the release of a slick, interactive CD-Rom depicting the defection of Kim Philby, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, as one of the great triumphs of Soviet intelligence.

Yuri Mogin, the case officer who handled two other traitors, Anthony Blunt and John Cairncross, appears chattering amiably about "my friends from Cambridge".

The history is by the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) — formerly the First Directorate of the KGB. The most revealing section concerns atomic spying in the 1940s, when Soviet agents within the top-secret Manhattan Project informed Stalin of America's nuclear capability months before he was told by President Roosevelt at the Yalta Conference in 1944.

The hour-to-hour vacillations of Khrushchev during the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis are also partly explained in the history, which cites a barrage of conflicting

data from agents in the US about America's readiness to engage in nuclear war.

Opening with a Carré-esque video sequence of a black Volga Sedan cruising through the double steel doors of the former KGB's espionage directorate at Yasinovo to the strains of Tchaikovsky, the CD-Rom history is a hi-tech, cross-referenced compilation of video interviews, documents and archive film.

Colonel Mogin, now in his eighties, says: "Our contacts [in British intelligence in the 1950s and 1960s] were a golden period for us. What the British kept secret even from the United States was not a secret to us. These people were not traitors so much as patriots to the ideal of the Soviet Union. These were dedicated people. I really think they promoted peace in our times."

But for all the apparent frankness, seekers of bombshells will find the account is tantalisingly incomplete. George Blake, the KGB spy who defected to Russia after

escaping from prison in 1966, is not mentioned at all, and the issue of spying on the US in the recent past is ignored, as is the topic of Soviet defectors.

"An intelligence service has to keep some things secret, by definition," said Colonel Mikhail Lyubimov, Copenhagen bureau chief of the KGB in the late 1970s and the former boss of the defector Oleg Gordievsky. "We are still much more open than our colleagues at [the CIA headquarters at] Langley."

"Our aim was to reveal as much as possible without harming the service's reputation or national security," said Major-General Yuri Kobaladze, head of the press department of the SVR. "Though we still have a kind of ideology, the philosophy of the intelligence service has changed significantly in the past few years. We are now prepared to admit some of our mistakes, and talk about our history frankly and openly."

In the interests of posterity, or perhaps public relations, the obsessively secretive service allowed researchers extensive access to classified files and film material, releasing previously unpublished documents and photographs.

The history was initiated by the SVR more than a year ago in conjunction with a Russian CD-Rom design company. A committee decided which documents could be declassified for the account.

General Kobaladze said: "We are not ashamed that we want good publicity. In London and Paris you can find hundreds of books on intelligence."



Boy, a 26-year-old Indian elephant at Kiev Zoo, lies sedated yesterday while veterinary surgeons from Ukraine and Colchester Zoo, Essex, fill an infected, fractured tusk. The surgery lasted most of yesterday. As soon as Boy was tranquillised, the team put oxygen tubes up his trunk and began treatment. The tusk should regrow.

Gun lobbyists 'betrayed by Dole'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE National Rifle Association threatened yesterday to withhold its presidential endorsement of Bob Dole after he decided not to oppose a ban on assault weapons.

Thousands of telephone calls, letters and faxes have arrived at the association's headquarters from members who said they felt betrayed by Mr Dole, the Republican nominee who would have expected support from the organisation.

Last week, Mr Dole issued a warning that if elected he might veto any repeal of President Clinton's assault weapons ban, enacted two

years ago, which outlawed the use of 19 types of semi-automatic firearms.

"What he has done is turned off NRA members from being active campaign workers in his election," said Tanya Metaksa, the group's chief Washington lobbyist. "NRA members don't just vote; they are campaigners, they walk precincts, they make phone calls, they stuff envelopes, but I doubt they'll be active now."

The group will not vote on its endorsement until September but Ms Metaksa said that it was unlikely Mr Dole would be approved. "President Clinton is the most anti-gun Presi-

dent ever to occupy the White House. But our members are disappointed and disillusioned with last week's statements by Mr Dole."

Four years ago, the group refused to endorse President Bush for re-election because he had failed actively to oppose the Brady Bill, the imposition of a five-day waiting period to buy a handgun.

With a membership of three million, the association has been a potent force in American politics but numbers have dwindled in the past two years and, according to figures released at its annual conference, the association's cash

and investments have declined by more than half to \$42.8 million (£28 million).

The Oklahoma City bombing and the shooting tragedies in Dunblane and Tasmania appear to have damaged the credibility of an organisation that supports the Second Amendment right to bear arms. But it still wields much political clout on Capitol Hill where 200 Republican House members voted this year to repeal the weapons ban. However, Mr Dole, eager to distance himself from the organisation's radical image, may feel that he no longer needs its support.

Huge Tiger attack on troop base

Colombo: Helicopters yesterday dropped commandos near a military base 175 miles north of here, besieged by thousands of Tamil Tiger rebels in one of the biggest battles of Sri Lanka's 13-year civil war.

Desperate soldiers had called in planes, helicopters and artillery support after waves of guerrillas broke through the Mullaitivu army camp's defence lines shortly after midnight, military officials said. Most of the base, with 1,200 soldiers, was said to be in rebel hands. Reinforcements were also arriving by sea. (AP)

Fijian ban on embassy essays

Suva: Fiji's Government has banned a school essay competition organised by the British Embassy because it says the contest disregards political sensitivities. The topic was: How will your future be affected by Fiji's Constitution? A commission appointed to review the Constitution is expected to table its recommendations to President Mara at the end of this month. (AP)

Eta suspected in barracks attack

Madrid: Three grenades were launched against Civil Guard barracks in the northeastern Spanish town of Puente la Reina but there were no injuries. The suspected Eta attack, the third against paramilitary barracks in the area this month, coincided with the departure of the Tour de France from the Navarre region. (Reuters)



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Food for thought

Suu Kyi calls for sanctions on Burma

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

AUNG SAN SUU KYI, the Burmese democracy campaigner and Nobel peace laureate, called in a smuggled video yesterday for international sanctions to be imposed on Burma to bring pressure on the Rangoon military regime.

"What we want are the kind of sanctions that will make it quite clear that economic change in Burma is not possible without political change," Daw Suu Kyi said in the appeal, which was shown to members of the European Parliament. "I think that the only people sanctions will affect are the privileged ones," she added.

The video was filmed by Vicky den Ouden, a Dutch journalist, who said she had found Daw Suu Kyi "under tremendous pressure, including emotional pressure" from the Burmese authorities.

Presenting the video to the parliament in Strasbourg, Clarys Kinnock, the British MEP, criticised the European Commission and European Union ministers for failing to take action against Rangoon for fear of damaging European interests in the region. She said the Commission had evidence of forced labour in Burma and urged it to act.

Although Britain, France and the United States are reluctant to adopt sanctions, pressure is growing for action. Denmark is leading the drive, spurred by the death in police custody in Rangoon of James Nichols, who served as honorary consul there for several European nations.

British soldier is killed in Bosnian shooting incident

BY STACY SULLIVAN IN ZAGREB AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A BRITISH soldier serving with the peacekeeping force in Bosnia-Herzegovina died of gunshot wounds yesterday.

Major Brett Bowdieu, a Nato spokesman, ruled out the involvement of any of Bosnia's former warring factions. The incident occurred in the west of the country. More than 30 soldiers in the 50,000-strong Nato-led peace force have died since taking over from the United Nations last December.

Meanwhile, Richard Holbrooke, the American envoy, said he expected to return from his latest round of shuttle diplomacy without assurances from President Milosevic of Serbia to depose Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader wanted for war crimes.

Mr Holbrooke, who was whisked away from his Wall Street investment banking firm in a last-ditch effort to salvage the faltering Dayton peace accord, said this would mean that Dr Karadzic's nationalist Serb Democratic Party (SDS) would probably be banned from parliament in September.

The ban, which was called for by Robert Frowick, the American head of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe which is responsible for organising Bosnia's postwar elections, could throw the peace process into its deepest crisis.

Mr Frowick said he would prohibit the SDS from participating in the elections if Dr Karadzic did not leave the public stage by today. Pre-election campaigning has been postponed on account of Dr Karadzic remaining as party leader. The Dayton accords forbid those indicted for war crimes from holding public office or participating in the elections.

However, officials at the Office of the High Representative, run by Carl Bildt, said the Bosnian Serbs would probably boycott the elections if the SDS were banned. "If the SDS is banned, there will be no elections."

Mr Bildt has stepped up diplomatic efforts to unseat Dr Karadzic over the past few weeks, and has been able gradually to sideline the Bosnian Serb leader by forcing him to relinquish his duties to a deputy.

However, the Americans and others insist that as long as Dr Karadzic remains on the political scene, he will use his influence to undermine the Dayton accord. The Muslim-led Bosnian Government has threatened to boycott the elections if Dr Karadzic is not removed from all positions of influence.

Karadzic's party may be banned from parliament.

GIs given a pregnant pause

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE code name of Operation Joint Endeavour for the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia has taken on an extra meaning for up to 70 of America's women soldiers. They have all been sent home for getting pregnant.

"They were declared medically unfit because the heavy equipment harnesses worn by American troops in Bosnia poses a health risk to pregnant soldiers," the Pentagon said yesterday. America's troops in Bosnia endure a ban on alcohol but not on sex.

The drop-out rate for mothers-to-be was greeted with scorn in Washington by members of Congress and con-

servative activists who question the wisdom of allowing women into frontline posts.

Robert Dornan, the hard-line Republican chairman of a congressional committee on security and personnel, promised to hold hearings on the pregnancies. He said: "They had better not be advising these women to have abortions."

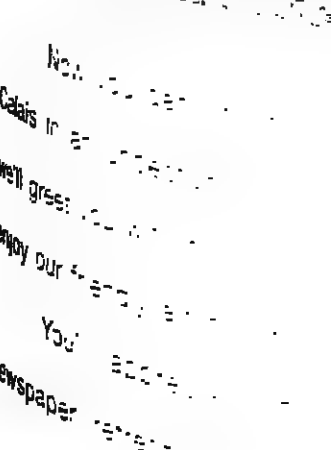
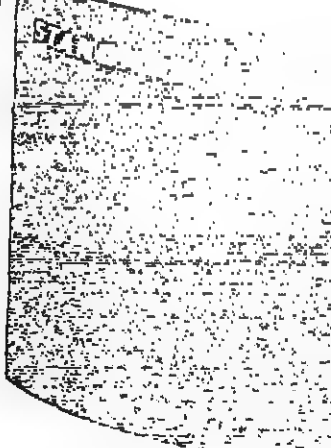
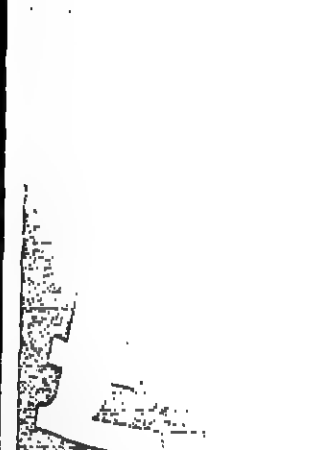
The armed services were naive to throw sexually active men and women together in close quarters in an isolated place, according to Robert Maginnis, a former Pentagon inspector-general who is with the Family Research Council. He said that many soldiers use pregnancy as a way of evading unpleasant duty. "If you are uncomfortable sitting

in the mud, feeling bored, getting fed up, unhappy with the food, all you have to do is find someone, get pregnant and you are back home."

The pregnancies, according to Mr Maginnis, were just the tip of the iceberg. "Even generals do it," he said, adding that the readiness of a few women to engage in sex created tensions that affected a unit's military efficiency.

Other experts said officers have known since the Gulf War when pregnancies emerged as a safe ticket home, that sex in the ranks hurts effectiveness. But they said commanders were unable to do much to curb it given the Clinton Administration's emphasis on promoting sexual equality in the armed forces.

Bail appeal means F.R. chief will



Bail appeal defeat means French rail chief will be fired

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

THE corruption scandal that is haunting France took two new turns yesterday, with a decision to remand in custody the head of the state railway company and the arrest of the Mayor of Cannes.

Loïc Le Floch-Prigent, president of the SNCF railway network, will lose his job after he failed in an appeal against the decision to remand him in custody in connection with an alleged financial scandal. Bernard Pons, the Transport Minister, said before the hearing that M Le Floch-Prigent would be replaced if he remained in prison.

Frédéric d'Allest, director of the Lagardère arms-to-telecommunications group, is favourite for the post, according to *Le Monde*.

Michel Mouillot, the Mayor of Cannes, was taken in for police questioning over claims by London Clubs, which runs a casino in the Côte d'Azur town, that he demanded Fr3 million (£385,000) in return for a licence to install slot machines. The money was allegedly destined for M Mouillot's re-election campaign.

Altered by the company, a French police surveillance unit was present as M Mouillot allegedly told a director to hand over the cash to a 46-year-old man at the Ritz Hotel in London. The man, who was known to French detectives as

a drug trafficker, was arrested by British police. M Mouillot denies the accusations.

Yesterday's court ruling concerning M Le Floch-Prigent represents a double embarrassment for the Government, which gave him the job last year when it knew that he was suspected of irregularities. The left-wing opposition will argue that his appointment shows that ministers are soft on corruption.

The Transport Ministry must also act quickly to ensure that the new SNCF president takes up a key programme designed to head off damaging conflict with unions. M Le Floch-Prigent was given the post after railway workers took a leading role in the public sector strike movement which crippled France last December. He had recently persuaded the Government

and unions to accept far-reaching reforms that involved the state paying off the SNCF's massive debts in return for productivity gains. Commentators gave a warning that, unless his successor wins the confidence of union leaders, further strikes are likely.

In its judgment yesterday, the Paris appeal court gave its backing to Eva Joly, an investigating judge, who said that the president of the SNCF could put pressure on other witnesses if he were freed on bail.

M Le Floch-Prigent is under investigation for alleged irregularities during his time as head of Elf-Aquitaine, the oil company. He is accused of pumping Fr800 million of Elf's money into Bidermann, the textile group, which was run by a friend. In return, he is alleged to have received personal favours worth Fr2.5 million.

M Le Floch-Prigent denies all the charges.

If M d'Allest is front-runner for a notoriously difficult job, other names have been mentioned by the French press. These include Louis Gallois, the president of Aérospatiale, Alain Gomez, the former head of the Thomson television-to-arms group, and Jean-Paul Bailly, head of the RATP, the Paris Metro network.

Jackson surprises Mandela

FROM INIGO GILMURE IN JOHANNESBURG

MICHAEL JACKSON, the pop star, made an unexpected appearance at President Mandela's 78th birthday party yesterday.

Jackson, who is visiting South Africa before staging concerts in the country in September, surprised the President, who was spending the morning with his family at a friend's mansion in Johannesburg. There were unconfirmed reports that the star sang for Mr Mandela.

On his arrival Jackson said he was "proud to be home" and later laid a wreath at a cemetery in Soweto in honour of students killed in the 1976 uprising. He hugged children, blew kisses at the crowd and said he loved them.

One resident said: "It is just a publicity stunt. You can't call him a black brother. Some people say he is black but others say he is white."



Michael Jackson is met at Johannesburg airport yesterday by Khoisan X, second left, of the militant PAC

Hillary 'shielded by radio to win funds'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE Voice of America, the broadcasting concern which prides itself on accuracy and independence, appeared to have developed something of a sore throat when graced by the presence of Hillary Clinton yesterday.

Long before the First Lady was due to arrive at the Washington headquarters for *Talk to America*, a phone-in

show aired to millions of people outside America, a memorandum had been circulated around the VOA offices stipulating that certain subjects were off limits.

The document, leaked to *The Wall Street Journal*, recounted a recent staff meeting with Geoffrey Cowan, director of the government-funded organisation and a close friend of President Clinton. "Geoff wants Hillary's VOA visit and TTA appearance to be pleasant. This should help on budget..." Says TTA questions must focus on Hillary trips abroad only... Geoff firm - no questions on Whitewater, healthcare, Paula Jones, Travelgate, Vince Foster etc will be taken from callers."

Mr Cowan said yesterday he remembered instructing his staff that questions should have an international focus but denied that he had issued an edict on forbidden territory. The hint of censorship to ensure the financial security of the VOA, however, caused embarrassment at the organisation. Republicans, who have targeted the agency as profligate, were sharpening their knives to question the implications of Mrs Clinton's appearance.

Her office said no ground rules had been set for the interview but agreed with the suggestion that callers should be confined to a discussion of her international travels.

Accord on global warming

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

POLLUTION from burning fossil fuels is being blamed for global warming after a majority of ministers from 60 industrialised and developing countries yesterday endorsed a study which has concluded that human activity is the key cause of climate change.

The commitments to stronger anti-pollution measures, announced at the United Nations conference on the Climate Change Convention, brushed aside resistance from oil-producing countries, as well as strenuous lobbying by US companies linked to the energy and motor industries.

More than 154 countries have ratified the UN Convention. They will be free to decide what measures to take to reach future pollution reduction targets, once these are decided on at a conference in Kyoto, Japan, late next year.



President Mubarak describing yesterday's talks

Netanyahu ready to negotiate peace, says Mubarak

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

BINYAMIN NETANYAHU, Israel's Prime Minister, yesterday convinced a sceptical President Mubarak of Egypt that he was sincere in pursuing peace, despite a hostile reception here.

On his first official visit to the Arab world, Mr Netanyahu was left in no doubt of the grassroots anger provoked by his hardline approach, but he was unexpectedly rewarded by Mr

Mubarak with an unscheduled military helicopter flight over the pyramids in recognition of his pledge to keep negotiating with the Palestinians.

Mr Netanyahu announced that next week David Levy, his Foreign Minister, would hold the first Cabinet-level meeting with Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president. He also pledged to partially lift the West Bank blockade and allow 10,000 Palestinian workers a day back into Israel. They have been barred since February's

Islamic suicide bombs.

The Israeli leader faced unprecedented media attacks here. Newspapers made offensive play on the Arabic meaning of part of his name, translated as "sinking". The biggest-selling opposition daily, *al-Wakef*, carried a crude cartoon depicting the Egyptian President holding his nose as he shook Mr Netanyahu's hand. An editorial by Mustapha Bakri, Editor of the daily *al-Ahram*, said: "The birds fly away to avoid smelling your hated fragrance."

"It is sometimes hard to remember that we have had a peace treaty with these people for the past 17 years," said one Israeli journalist flying on the Prime Minister's plane.

Mr Mubarak later told reporters he was convinced that Mr Netanyahu was not as bad as he had been painted. "When I met him, I had a clear picture about what could happen, a clear picture that he is going to go through the peace process. He is ready to negotiate here and there."

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A man who knows his station



Matthew Bannister, the new BBC Head of Radio: he is confident, brisk, emphatic and convincing... and even though he asserts that Chris Evans is the most talented entertainer in British broadcasting, he is no Yahoo

Matthew Bannister is custodian of BBC radio's crown jewels. How well will he care for them?

Blue skies over Birmingham, where the Radio Academy convened this week. The BBC has at last found a man who can communicate without sounding like a dyslexic Dalek or a bullying prep school master. Matthew Bannister, the new Head of Radio — Liz Forgan's replacement — managed to put across the BBC's case with a confident, baritone delivery: brisk, emphatic and convincing.

When he was given the job last month, the Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells protested on *Feedback* that "the man who formerly ran Radio 1, a station played by mechanics in garages, had been given the crown jewels". And wasn't he the man who had axed the ageing disc-jockeys on Radio 1, "the station your mum listened to over a cup of cocoa", and installed the odious Chris Evans?

Bannister wears the tough expression that comes naturally to one with eyes on the piggy side and heavy jowls. He is 39, stockily-built; his hair curls over his collar. But he is no Yahoo. To begin his speech entitled "Tomorrow" he used a hoary but effective play. He read out newspaper headlines such as "Opposition mounts in BBC to new programme plans", from *The Times*; and extracts from news stories such as "Grievance and resentment run deep at Broadcasting House... conflict between cost-conscious bureaucrats and those innocent people who say they just want to make prog-grammes" and then revealed that these were all from January 1970, when the BBC chiefs announced that the Home Service and the Third Programme were to be replaced by newangled Radio 4 and Radio 3.

No change at the BBC happens without enraging both its staff and the public. Three years ago I was at the same Birmingham radiofest, to hear Mark Tully's blast against the BBC and against John Birt's managerial communications. "So chillingly formalised and systematised", engendering "a sense of fear". It has been clear in the years since that more than half the rage and fear is caused, ironically, by bad presentation and inept communication.

Hence the general confidence inspired this week by Bannister's first appointment. James Boyle as new Controller for Radio 4. Boyle has that reassuring Scots voice, and immediately endeared himself even to Radio 4 vigilantes with his *Today* phone-in. Asked what was the abiding characteristic of Radio 4, Boyle canily replied "intelligence".

Bannister, unlike his predecessor, is a born-and-bred radio man. He read law at Nottingham University but got "the Drama Society third", having spent all his time on the stage. Afterwards, he took a dogbody apprenticeship at Radio Nottingham at £3,000 a year, progressing from rock shows and religious programmes to presenting a current affairs breakfast show.

Eight years ago he was just about to move from Capital to GLR when a terrible blow struck. His first wife, Amanda Walker, a BBC journalist, drowned while swimming in the sea on holiday on the Costa Blanca. Bannister was playing with their small daughter Jessica on the beach when her body was brought ashore. "It was a traumatic time," he said. He had to fling himself into his new job, which was running GLR.

Happily, he found a new wife, "even more high-powered than I am", an EMI vice-president who travels the world. They have a son, Joseph, six, and live their fast-track life from a house in North Kensington, with an elderly live-in nanny named Lydia and a cottage in West Sussex to escape to at weekends.

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



He was brought up in Sheffield (hence Birtian vowels and his pronunciation of Radio 4), the eldest of three sons of a British Steel research chemist who was also a radio comedy enthusiast. So he grew up with the *Goons* and *Round the Horne*.

He does not have to be told that the BBC's Radio 3 and 4 audiences are sensitive, critical and resistant to change. As with re-naming pubs, any tampering with schedules makes people feel amputated from their pasts. Recent debates over Gerry Anderson (the wrong voice for Radio 4) and Paul Gambaccini (wrong for Radio 3) have proved the power of the listener. Which is as it should be: radio, of all media, is the most intimate. Bannister understands that unique relationship. He says he has no plan to change Radio 4's abiding aura of well-researched, crafted and authoritative programmes.

But Bannister also defends his assertion that Chris Evans is "the most talented entertainer operating in British broadcasting today". I sampled Evans yesterday and could not endure for more than five minutes the manic you-don't-have-to-be-mad-to-work-here-but-it-helps atmosphere.

Yes, he has had to give Evans wiggles about taste and decency, but he waxes lyrical about Evans's "instinctive broadcaster's ability to invent fantasies, events, ideas from nothing".

I thought I should warn him about the fatuity of trying to wean listeners from one BBC

station to another. We all gravitate to a station according to age and need. "Audience reach" is a spurious goal. You don't get the young to graduate to Radio 4 by grafting on regional voices, any more than you will persuade us Radio 4 types to enjoy Chris Evans.

"Yes. We shouldn't try to reach out by doing things that are out of nature and character with the service," he said. "But we can commission new ideas which might bring people in. Radio 4 comedy like *On The Hour*, which spawned Alan Partridge, brought in new talent — and new listeners."

The point about the five BBC stations is that a listener knows almost instantaneously whether a programme sounds right for the station. People have instantly discovered that *Goodness Gracious Me* — a sharp, witty Asian comedy show — is dead right for Radio 4, while *Cross Questioned*, a dire panel game with a giggling Caroline Quentin in the chair, is emphatically not.

"Look, we are having these conversations all the time," Bannister said. "Some new ideas seem pretty ropey at first but you can work on them. We have the wonderful security of public funding. It takes time to know whether a radio show works." But if they had heeded listeners' immediate and visceral reactions, it need not have taken so long before they put Gerry Anderson out of his misery? He said they had to give it time and do proper research first.

"It's like coming into your own house and finding someone has moved the furniture around. It is disconcerting. But if you persevere, it may just be that the sofa is now in a better position to see the view from the window."

Radio listeners' storm-tossed existence is not over yet. Yesterday John Birt faced a parliamentary grilling about the World Service. Bannister — whose remit does not include the World Service — insists that the base and cry within Bush House is abating: Tony Hall's eloquent speech to the academy had converted everyone.

The job of radio chief, Bannister is discovering, is to allay fears. "Bi-media does not mean putting television programmes out on the radio," he explained to his audience. "It just means our broadcasters have the exciting potential to broadcast in either medium, which only the BBC can offer."

Broadcasting House, "a building we all feel emotional about", will not be "full of accountants". "When news and current affairs move into TV Centre, BH will still be full of programme broadcasters from Radios 1, 2, 3 and 4."

And by late 1997 we shall all want DAB — Digital Audio Broadcasting. It will solve the two great irritations of radio: interference (there is none) and tuning in (you push a button). Even the diehards of Tunbridge Wells will take to it. They just need a Bannister to tell them so without feeling they are being bullied into believing it.

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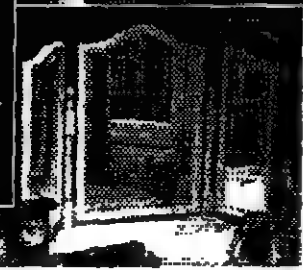
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Grilling the whizz-kids of Whitehall

Ministers mustn't hide behind officials, says Sue Cameron

The "kids" who wrote the Treasury report leaked to *The Times* this week are mature enough to be aware that Whitehall is about to find itself in the eye of a constitutional storm. Mandarins are going to find it harder to keep their secrets secret — especially from inquisitive MPs. That is why the report proposes a pre-emptive bid by Treasury officials to improve contacts with the chairmen of Commons select committees.

The House of Commons may be about to reassess itself against the executive, in a move that could set the leaders of both major parties against backbench MPs. The reformers want to make named civil servants directly answerable to MPs under certain circumstances — notably when the Government machine is being accused of misconduct, misjudgment or maladministration. They believe senior officials and the chief executives of government agencies should answer to Commons select committees without ministers having an automatic right to gag them or to stop particular civil servants appearing at all.

For years governments have insisted that officials can give evidence to select committees only on behalf of their ministers and under their direction. It is a rule that has never been endorsed by the Commons. It means that ministers can forbid officials to answer awkward questions from MPs, or ban named civil servants from appearing before select committees altogether — as they did after the Westland fiasco and again when the Trade and Industry Select Committee started looking into the Iraqi Supergun affair. On the latter occasion, the Government's refusal to allow two retired officials to appear was condemned by Sir Richard Scott as a "failure to comply fully with the obligations of accountability to Parliament".

It was the Scott report on exports to Iraq that started calls for change, for it insisted that ministers must make "the best first-hand evidence" available to investigating select committees. Often that means civil servants, not ministers. Much of the time, ministers are happy for their officials to speak freely to select committees. The trouble comes when the Government has something to hide. That is when ministers want to gag officials. But now the cry for reform has been taken up by the mandarins' own trade union, the First Division Association. The association is concerned because the Scott inquiry showed how easily civil servants can be blamed for wrongdoing or incompetence, even though they have no opportunity to defend themselves publicly.

Already the Trade and Industry Committee has spelt out the shortcomings of the present system in its latest report. The main finding of the report which covered export licensing and the UK-based company BMARC, was to clear the former Treasury and defence minister Jonathan Aitken of any misconduct. Those sections of the report which had been baying for Mr Aitken's blood were none too keen on

advertising such a finding, which meant that the committee's recommendations on Whitehall also went largely unreported. Yet these were of huge import.

"We have no quarrel," says the report, "with the principle that civil servants give evidence on behalf of their ministers, subject to an overriding obligation not to provide untrue or misleading answers. However, it is not a necessary consequence of that principle that ministers have complete freedom to determine which questions civil servants may answer, even when the reason for refusing to answer is only departmental or ministerial embarrassment."

The committee goes on to suggest that the Commons should specify the reasons it is willing to accept for civil servants refusing to answer questions — such as national security. Such a move would introduce a vital additional check on the power of the executive, making it harder for unscrupulous or incompetent ministers to hide. The Public Services Committee is expected to make a similar call when it reports later this month.

Predictably, the Government is against any such change, on the spurious ground that it would reduce the accountability of elected ministers to the Commons. But what of new Labour? Surely the party of constitutional reform must favour more vigorous Commons controls over the unbridled power of government? Not so. Tony Blair and his Shadow team are every bit as conservative as John Major and his ministers. Senior Labour people trot out exactly the same threadbare arguments about ensuring that elected ministers, rather than unelected officials, are accountable to the Commons.

Labour and Tory backbenchers think differently. The Trade and Industry Committee, chaired by Labour's Martin O'Neill, accepts that while ministers must be accountable for everything that happens in their departments, they cannot be held responsible for things that are done in their name but which they know nothing about. "Without examining the internal workings of a department, it is likely to be difficult or impossible to ascertain where a minister's personal responsibility ends," the MPs say. "Select committees cannot leave it to ministers to determine that point, since whenever anything is done wrong, ministers will have a strong interest in minimising the area of their personal responsibility. The doctrine that accountability and responsibility are separate therefore requires that select committees be able to take evidence from named civil servants."

Ironically it is the Government itself that has been the chief exponent of the idea that accountability and responsibility are quite different matters. But the Government, whether it be Tory or Labour, cannot have it both ways. If ministers are to escape blame, then MPs must be able to question civil servants freely, in order to find out where the blame does lie.



That sinking feeling

Not only are London's bridges falling down — the entire infrastructure is collapsing. And as for Pisa...

is what the Road Federation man says it is:

... the findings clearly show that structures designed for another age cannot meet the needs of a modern capital. This situation only serves to highlight a London-wide problem of growing demand being placed on increasingly decrepit infrastructure. It is a situation which will worsen in the future if remedial action is not taken. It is impossible to plan either for the long or short term with a transport infrastructure that is in an unreliable or even dangerous condition. ... it has been discovered that as the tide rises and falls and river-bed materials shift, the centre of the Rotherhithe tunnel is constantly lifting and settling while its ends remain in fixed positions. Though heavy protective pads have been sunk over the tunnel, the stresses threaten to rupture the ageing tubing, which dates from 1908.

Dear reader — would you be quite happy going regularly through a tunnel beneath the water which is constantly lifting and settling and which dates from 1908? That's nothing. The grim truth is that the entire infrastructure upon which we live is sinking. When last we measured, it was found that the entire Palace of Westminster is two millimetres lower than before; true, two millimetres are hardly enough to get John Major drowned, but beloved Big Ben himself has sunk three millimetres deeper. But "Dafest Bagger of the Month Rosette" must surely go to the London Underground spokesman who said, "The problem we are finding is that the historic buildings in Westminster just aren't as well-built as the modern ones."

Ah, but what about the Leaning Tower of Pisa, eh? We have all seen pictures of it, and many of us have been there. Those who go there are invariably cornered, most generally, by the sellers of guide-books and maps for the birds, but for a few more lire they can enjoy the Great Tower Joke. This takes the visitor a specified distance from the Tower; the visitor stands as if beside the Tower with hand outstretched; the vendor steps back and clicks his camera; when the visitor sees the picture it looks exactly as though he had been holding up the Tower. But someone will have to hold up the Tower.

It is one of the oldest monuments in Italy. Charlemagne came here, to what was a truly great city. It began in the 11th century, and the Pisans continued to add to their prize with great mosaics and bronze doors, frescoes, a beautiful baptistry, a cathedral, a Campo Santo, a cemetery. And then, the very last item was built — a bell tower. And that bell tower is the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Galileo was born in Pisa, but almost all the stories of him are apocryphal; he didn't say "Eppur si muove", though he certainly thought it; he didn't throw stones off the Leaning Tower to demonstrate his theories. But you see, the Leaning Tower began to lean early in its life. Fall or no fall, the Pisans' great monument has already stood for more than seven hundred years, and if it falls now, it can be proud of itself.

I must have been one of the last to climb that wonderful tower, because in 1990 it was closed to the public — the danger was too great. Mind you, when I did climb that staircase I came down trembling; the famous tilt has an extraordinarily powerful pull; going towards the outside (there is nothing to hang on to) I thought I would be thrown over the edge. Incidentally, it is true, as I have heard, that no one has committed suicide by throwing himself off the Leaning Tower, by contrast with the substantial number of suicides from the Eiffel Tower?

But heard? Yes again, a bevy of scientists has galloped to the rescue of the wonderful tower; this time it is politics. "But I tell you, I like some of what Tony Blair's doing. Yeah, new Labour's fine." I understand Despy was particularly impressed by the arrival of Peter Mandelson in a chauffeur-driven Jaguar.

Dog-gone

STILL MISSING: one border collie answering to the name of Peter and with a faux-aristocratic languor inherited from his owner, the actor Anthony Andrews.

Local newspapers around Salisbury have been carrying advertisements asking for the return of the nine-year-old black-and-tan dog, which went missing recently with his friend, a Jack Russell called Skippy.

A sizeable reward is on offer. "We have had dogs all our lives," says Andrews, "but Peter is probably the most important. He has spanned generations. We are all devastated."

Mr Pud

IN CHIGWELL, Essex, the excitement is hard to bear. One of Hollywood's biggest stars has let it be known that he likes the place and wants a property in the locality.

Philip Howard



True sports fans want to be on the side that's losing

The big match between Ian Botham and Imran Khan in the High Court is providing a midsummer entertainment. There is no point in complaining that it is childish. As friends say, the only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys — in this case the cost of the lawyers. One finds oneself in the unique and embarrassing posture of shouting for the lawyers on both teams. May their fees be huge (not that they need our cheers to secure that). But it is difficult to know whom else to cheer for in this international of the unsporting spirit. And may whoever wins never be called to bat again.

I always fail the Tebbit Test. I do not see how anybody who enjoys cricket could not have shouted for India in the recent series. They had the one player of genius in Tendulkar. But Ganguly also played his strokes with wit and style, and though Kumble was underbowed, a leg-spin bowler is so much more interesting to watch than our dreary intimidators. The Indians played as though they were enjoying themselves — literally, for sport. Our grim professionals never looked as though they were having a good time except when Cork indulged in unpleasant playground triumphalism when (on the rare occasion) he took a wicket.

The hard professionals of English cricket, down the order from Atherton and Stewart back through Gooch and Gatting to Boycott (who is much more fun now as commentator than he ever was as the most boring and selfish opening bat in the history of the game) have been hard to cheer for. Gower, the only recent English player to make batting a pleasure rather than a profession, was a course dropped for not taking the game boringly enough. Naturally we cheer for Sri Lanka, who bat as though they would risk their lives for a perfect cover drive, rather than the cautious prodders and accumulators of bigger nations.

The trouble with the Tebbit Test is that it has no conception of what sport is for. Sport means shouting for the underdog, painting your face for David against Goliath, admiring a beautiful late cut even though it wins the match for your opponents, cheering for Yeovil Town against Manchester United.

But even I was worried when I found myself shouting for Germany against England in the semi-finals of Euro 96. Some of this anti-Tebbit may have been a staid sour grapes because Terry Venables had not selected me for his squad. Part of it was because I had to stay at the office to write a "Football Home" piece when England won. I tried rewriting when eventually Germany hacked it, substituting "Germany" for "England" and vice versa, but by that time cars were burning in Trafalgar Square. So it seemed an inappropriate day for a paean in praise of footy, and we spiked the whole idea.

In any case, the behaviour of the pitch of our players, manager and Daily Mirror was infinitely unsporting. Germany looked the better side and had the better supporters. They had lost their two best players. The German players confirmed their sporting appearance by allowing their PRs to take a full page in *The Times* after the final to thank us for being good hosts. Can you imagine our infantile and surly shower doing that? In the final, of course, I shouted for the Czech Republic on the principle of cheer for the underdog and hope for the unexpected.

So in the golf at Lytham St Anne's today, sportsmen will be shouting for players of style and danger: the Spaniard Severiano Ballesteros rather than the grim Amer-English professional Nick Faldo, who looks as glum as if he had a putter rammed up his 18th hole. It has been impossible to shout for England at rugby against much smaller nations (even Wales), while the officials are such mercenary and incompetent old farts, and the players are dreary kickers, bulldozers and percentage players, shutting out the flair of risk-taking artists such as Stuart Barnes and Jeremy Guscott.

So at the Olympics we Tebbit-traitors shall groan at the pomp of their national anthems, and cheer for the little men and women from unknown countries who come from nowhere to take the gold. And as for the High Court, that has nothing to do with sport, except legally.

Royal stink

GAS MASKS are to hand in the Princess of Wales Conservatory at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Just days after the royal divorce was set in motion, a plant that hasn't flowered for more than 30 years is beginning to bloom: it will unleash a stench so fearsome that gardeners are already running for their smelling salts.

The Titan Arum, a native of Sumatra, is otherwise known as the "corpse flower" because of the suffocating stink of its metre-high flower. It last produced a flower at Kew in 1963, and on the previous occasion, in 1926, police had to be called in to control boisterous crowds of visitors egging each other on to sample its foul odour of putrid flesh.

To flower, the plant, grown out of an enormous tuber weighing 11kg, needs an exact combination of a dry winter followed by specific temperatures and humidity in summer. The bloom is expected in a week or so, but will wither after three days.

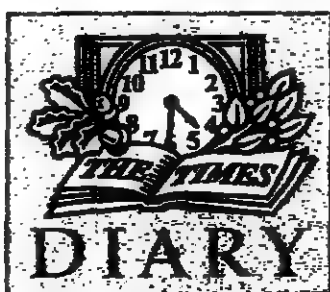
"I haven't smelt it myself, but it is supposed to be a mixture of rotting fish and burnt sugar: visitors will find it quite unpleasant," says Jenny Evans, assistant cura-

tor in charge of Kew's tropical section. "It's a bit of a problem. We are planning a one-way system for viewing, because we don't want people fighting to get near it and then being killed in the stampede to get away."

● A reformed character, Johnny Rotten. The Sex Pistols' lead singer, who encouraged his audience to spit at him during his shows in the 1970s, was agitated when a young fan revived the habit



Look but don't inhale



at a concert on Wednesday night in Shepherd's Bush, west London. "Yuk! that's disgusting," shouted Rotten before emptying his bottle of Perrier over the miscreant in a frenzied revenge.

Prime time

MORE good news for Joe Klein, the Newsweek writer who recently unmasked himself as the "Anonymous" author of *Primary Colours*, the barely fictionalised account of President Clinton's 1992 campaign: Fidel Castro is a big fan.

The Cuban leader was spotted on a recent flight stuck into the closing pages of *Primary Colours*, doubtless doing some background work on his opponent during the present sanctions fracas. Despite his resolute refusal to speak Eng-

lish, Castro is known to understand it when important works of fiction are at hand.

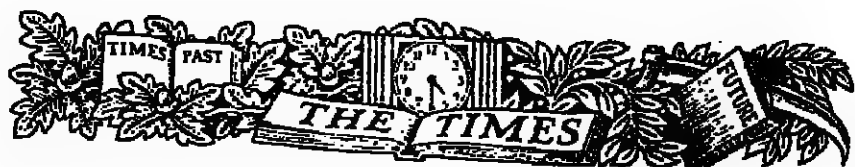
Left out?

IS Derek Hutton planning to bring his unique militant approach to new Labour? I ask because the Liverpool firebrand spent an evening deep in conversation with a couple of Tony Blair's top team of Labour MPs at a party thrown on Wednesday by the *Sunday Express*.

Hutton said he was done with



"I know Di and Fergie are here somewhere"



FOLLOW THE LEADER

Labour must be tough on strikes and the causes of strikes

The Labour Party should be showing a little more of the traditional trade union virtue of solidarity. That does not mean standing shoulder to shoulder on the picket line with the members of Aslef and the RMT who have so wantonly damaged the capital's interests by their strike on the London Underground. Labour should, instead, be vigorously supporting its leader. Tony Blair is right to want the Tube strike called off. He has been ill-served so far by the grudging words of Robin Cook and the sullen silence of John Prescott. If Mr Blair's party is to speak credibly for the citizen and against vested interests at the next election then it should, audibly and enthusiastically, support him now.

The strike is the bluntest of instruments and these strikers have the weakest of cases. London Underground have offered Tube drivers an increase of 3.2 per cent which would take basic salaries to £25,436, a higher figure than that paid to the multi-lingual drivers on advanced Eurostar trains. The strikers are holding out for a reduction in their working week by one hour to 37.5 hours. For the sake of an hour a week these handsomely-paid men paralyse a city. The cost to commerce, inconvenience to the public and damage to the capital's tourist reputation are incalculable. Arbitration is available but the unions want confrontation. Seldom in the last ten years can industrial muscle have been so crudely directed with such slender justification.

Recognising the scale of anger in London, and aware of the marginal seats clustered along its commuter belt, it is understandable that Mr Blair should have intervened in the dispute. His decision to have David Blunkett, Labour's Education and Employment spokesman, call for a return to work is an astute response to public feeling. Mr Blair's stance will have a resonance outside the capital. It is intended to demonstrate there is steel behind Labour's rhetoric of

"fairness, not favours" towards trade unions. It is part of the broader strategy of distancing New Labour from interest groups and trying to identify it with the citizen which Tony Blair has imported from Bill Clinton's new Democrats.

Unfortunately for Mr Blair, his own lack of trade union roots and the reaction of his colleagues have undermined his efforts to end the strike. Asked if he supported his leader Robin Cook could only mutter that, "I share collective responsibility for anything any of us say." John Prescott, according to one colleague, had to be "scraped off the wall" when he heard the news. Mr Prescott may enjoy RMT sponsorship but he is also Mr Blair's deputy. He stands higher in the affections of the unions than any other member of the Labour leadership. Once before, at the 1993 Labour Party Conference on the principle of One Member, One Vote, Mr Prescott used his authority to persuade the labour movement to adapt to reality and support its leader. In the interests of his party, and the travelling public, he should again use his influence and echo his leader's call for a return to work.

If, however, Mr Blair wants Labour to be a truly modern party he must be not only tough on strikes, but also tough on the causes of strikes. It is no coincidence that the industrial unrest which has caused such misery this summer, on the Underground and in the Royal Mail, occurs in the public sector. The Tube drivers are insulated from the consequences of their action by their state-subsidised employer in a way that the British Airways pilots who drew back from a strike are not. Legislation has helped promote industrial peace but what has guaranteed it is the discipline of the marketplace. Labour is right to call for arbitration now, but if its leaders are now genuine champions of the consumer they should also be arguing for enterprise in the future.

ATLANTA'S HOUR

From Southern defeats and segregation to Olympic City

In the early morning tomorrow a spectacular ceremony will signify the opening of the centenary Olympic Games. For the next two weeks the eyes of the world will be on Atlanta, where a drama involving 20 sports and 271 events will be played out — a far cry from the amateur Athens affair of 1896. With the Americans in charge, a few matters may be certain: it will be meticulously organised and make a tidy profit. This is no small achievement in itself. Montreal, the host city 20 years ago, was virtually bankrupted by the experience.

This is the second time in 12 years that the Games have been staged in the United States. Los Angeles was the venue in 1984. That might strike neutrals as dull or unfair. The two cities are superficially similar. Both have grown beyond recognition since the war. In each case expansion has come from the sun-belt shift in America's population — fuelled by the rise of modern communications and the invention of the air conditioner that made life bearable. Both are capitals of regional empires: Los Angeles that of the entertainment industry; Atlanta the commercial and cultural centre of the thriving New South.

Beyond that though, they are quite separate — above all on the question of race. Los Angeles is a vast sprawl but seemingly soulless with it, a gigantic set of suburbs linked by freeways without much of a common core. Inner LA is almost exclusively the preserve of the poorest minorities, especially black citizens: community relations are ever on the edge of an explosion. In their different ways the riots of 1992, triggered by the

Rodney King beating, and the trial and acquittal of OJ Simpson last year, both demonstrated this. Black politicians can occasionally reach the top, as mayor Tom Bradley did, but the power structure is overwhelmingly white with an increasingly important Asian-American element.

Atlanta is different. The former railway town that now sits at the intersection of six interstate highways, and boasts the best and busiest airport in America, was the cradle of the civil rights revolution, the home and political base of Martin Luther King. Before then it had a turbulent past. The city was burnt to the ground by General Sherman during the War between the States and became a seedbed of southern resentments over the next century, only recently, and reluctantly, abandoning its rigid segregation.

But Atlanta has seen a social revolution over the past three decades. The slogan "A city too busy to hate" is an extravagant claim but not outrageous by the standards of American cities. Integration is clearly visible in its politics, not least in the achievements of then-mayor Andrew Young in capturing this tournament. That spirit is also present and getting stronger in the corporate domain.

Atlanta is the spiritual capital both of Black America as well as the economically self-confident New South of Newt Gingrich. The overwhelming preponderance of African-Americans among their track athletes makes the setting all the more appropriate. This, not the popular cliché of a Coca-Cola Olympics is what will give these Games a special flavour.

VENI, VIDI — GLUG, GLUG, GLUG

When Julius Caesar ruled the waves — or tried to

The wreck of a Roman ship on the seabed a mile off Hayling Island could help us rewrite more than marine archaeology. If carbon dating and dendrochronology of its foreign wood establish that this is the genuine *navis*, the find could revive interest in two fascinating questions. Why did the Roman Empire fall? Why did the British Empire rise?

Romans hated the sea. Because of this hatred, Rome was an absurdly inconvenient place from which to run an empire. Every army had to march long leagues to the top of Italy before making a sinister or a dextrous turn to do any conquering. Unsurprisingly, the Romans soon tired of this.

In his famous set-piece in *On the Republic*, Cicero praised Romulus for his wisdom in avoiding the coastal sites of Greek cities when he founded Rome. In this way he kept his capital city clear of all the corruption and danger that the sea stands for. Roman poets were plangent about the dangers of sea travel. When they had to fight at sea, Romans endeavoured to make it as like the land as possible with grappling-irons and drawbridges. Lucius defined Epicurean happiness (and perhaps *Eudaimonia*) as standing on a cliff in a storm watching others in peril on the sea, and thinking, "There but for the grace of terra firma go I."

Of course, for some tasks, like invading Britain, ships were unavoidable. In such cases Roman leaders believed, like Colin Powell centuries later, in the military doctrine of massive deployment of force.

They insisted on the largest possible numbers of ships — they knew that a momentary caprice of jealous Neptune could turn a claim of *Veni, Vidi, Vici* into a cry of *glug, glug, glug*.

Romans may have feared the sea but there was the need for luxury imports. The Monte Testaccio (Broken Pot Mount) outside Rome was made up of 53 million imported olive oil amphorae deliberately broken after their contents were transferred into larger storage vessels. It is a kilometre around at the base and represents an oil lake of 6,000 million litres. The Roman plebs lived on imported corn, 150,000 tons a year shipped from Egypt, but twice as much again from Sicily and North Africa. This is a rare statistic from the ancient world.

The wealthy Roman dressed in wool from Miletus and linen from Egypt. His wife wore silks from China, decorated herself with pearls from India, and made up with cosmetics from Arabia. He seasoned his food with Indian pepper and sweetened it with Athenian honey, and had it served on dishes of Spanish silver by British slaves. He washed it down with Sicilian wine decanted from Syrian glass.

So hatred of the sea did not extend to hating imports by sea. This Roman shipwreck is a reminder that before Britain learned to rule the waves Rome had a good try at doing so. But it would still be interesting to find out in which direction the ship was sailing when it went down, and who made up its crew. Perhaps they were Roman Britons, the first seadogs of Empire.

Trusting the trust on 'The Observer'

From the Editor of the South China Morning Post

Sir, The current flurry of words over *The Observer* and the behaviour of the Scott Trust, in which Anthony Howard joined this week ("A paper without a cause", July 16), may prove to be an eddy in a journalistic teaspoon. But, despite having recently suffered the very fate predicted by Philip Hope-Wallace of being sacked by a liberal paper around Christmas, I found Mr Howard's doubts about whether *Lonrho* was any worse an owner than the Scott Trust surprising.

Lonrho's ownership saw *The Observer* going to the brink of extinction in a merger with the *Independent on Sunday*. It saw an annual loss rising to more than £10 million, and circulation falling by 10 per cent a year. Above all, it produced a paper where, whatever excuses were dreamed up at the bar of the Garrick Club, most senior journalists went along with the *Pauline* deal of following Tiny Rowland's agenda, when he so wished. In return for *Lonrho* stamping their pay and expenses cheques. The muddle, mess, self-deception and self-indulgence which met us when the *Guardian* group took over *The Observer* in 1993 was extraordinary.

Whatever one's personal feelings about the behaviour of the Scott Trust and the rewriting of recent history at the *Guardian* group, it was the Trust — described by Mr Howard as well-meaning but crass amateurs — that gave *The Observer* back the self-respect which those who accepted *Lonrho*'s passport to a cushy life had forfeited.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN FENBY
(Editor, *The Observer*, 1993-95)
Editor, *South China Morning Post*,
29 Floor, Dorset House,
979 King's Road,
Quarry Bay, Hong Kong,
July 18.

From Mr Andrew Jaspán

Sir, Leaving to one side his rather gratuitous insults, I am delighted that Anthony Howard largely agrees with my assessment (*Media*, July 10) of why *The Observer* is in the mess it is and why its owners have proven themselves to be largely unfit to restore its fortunes.

Yours,
ANDREW JASPÁN
(Editor, *The Observer*, 1995-96),
2 Glasslyn Road, N8,
July 16.

From the Chairman, The Scott Trust

Sir, I'm sure the Scott Trust has plenty to learn from Anthony Howard about running liberal newspapers. How could one fail to be impressed by such a famous pillar of *The Observer* from the days when it was owned by *Lonrho*?

It is hard to know which of his credentials to respect more: the high principle he showed when he worked for Tiny Rowland, or the detachment he now feigns, as a member of the *Times* payroll, to discussion of one of its direct commercial competitors.

Mr Howard says the Trust are amateurs. This is a funny way to describe a body whose collective editorial experience, mostly in senior positions, adds up to about 150 years, and its managerial experience to at least 100 years. It has run *The Guardian* with manifest professionalism, and is bringing the same quality to the paper over whose dismal fall from grace Mr Howard presided as deputy editor.

Yours sincerely,
HUGO YOUNG,
Chairman, The Scott Trust,
The Guardian,
119 Farringdon Road, EC1,
July 16.

From Mr Victor Olliver

Sir, Anthony Howard attributes the decline of *The Observer* to a drying up of heroic liberal causes, yet I suspect the truth has a lot more to do with *rhininess* than anything else.

Relative to *The Sunday Times*' expanding multi-sectional girth through the Eighties, *The Observer* gradually took on a pinched, anorexic look, failing the first test of value for money as it lay wanly by the side of its fatter and fatter competitor.

A quality Sunday paper must promise to get one through the bulk of an idle day, a selling point that renders such quaint considerations as editorial politics or "causes" of secondary importance.

Yours faithfully,
VICTOR OLLIVER,
3 Bessborough Terrace,
Lancing, West Sussex,
July 16.

British history

From Mr Simon Ellis

Sir, I would suggest to Nick Tate, the Government's curriculum chief, that students of history (report, July 17) will gain a better understanding of present-day issues from studying the rise of America and Russia as superpowers, China in revolution, and the demise of apartheid in South Africa than topics like Henry VIII and Oliver Cromwell, which are really no more relevant than Jack and the Beanstalk or Robin Hood.

Yours sincerely,
SIMON ELLIS,
38 Forest View, E4,
July 17.

Compromise and concession as way forward for Ulster

From Sir David Goodall

Sir, It is difficult to understand the Government's determination to treat the routing of the Orange march at Drumcree as a matter to be decided by the Chief Constable alone, on purely operational grounds, without regard to its political consequences.

The resulting spectacle of the RUC, backed up by British troops, penning nationalists into their homes and bludgeoning them off the streets to make way for a provocative Orange march, has not just played into the hands of the IRA. It has alienated even the most moderate elements within the minority community and revived all their doubts about ever being allowed to achieve "equal legitimacy" with Unionism as long as Northern Ireland remains part of the United Kingdom. It is a spectacle of which we in Britain, as well as Unionist leaders, should be ashamed.

What may be less evident, at least in Dublin, is the extent to which the creation of the "pan-nationalist consensus", and what has looked to Unionists like unremitting pressure from the Irish Government and the SDLP for concessions to Sinn Féin, have sharpened the sense of insecurity and resentment within the Unionist community and thus helped to generate the aggressive intransigence of Drumcree. There are lessons here for Dublin and the SDLP as well as for London and the Unionists.

It is illusory to think (as your leader of July 15 seemed to imply) that the search for a political settlement could take the form of a return to constitutional immobility with a few human-rights trimmings as a sop to nationalists.

The demographic balance alone makes it clear that no system of government for Northern Ireland will command the necessary level of acceptance from both communities unless it includes a significant Irish dimension as well as accommodating the Unionist determination that the Province should remain within the United Kingdom.

Power of PR

From Mr Michael Rowe

Sir, Like every profession, including journalism, public relations has its underperformers, but to describe it as iniquitous, as Giles Coren does ("A matter of trust or tricks", *Media*, July 17), is unduly harsh.

Journalists and PR professionals have more in common than Mr Coren might wish to admit. No PR professional expects that a press release sent to 100 publications will be published by them all, any more than a journalist can expect his article to be read by every reader of the newspaper.

A recent press release we sent on behalf of a client to all the national newspapers was used by about half of them, and equally spread between tabloids and quality; if journalists do not agree what a good news story is, then how can the humble PR professional predict with 100 per cent accuracy?

PRs need journalists but journalists need us too; although of course they would never admit it.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL ROWE
(Managing Director),
Charlton Communications,
70 Chalk Farm Road, NW1,
July 17.

From Professor Sam Black

Sir, Media relations is an important part of public relations, but it is only one aspect, and sending press releases

to newspapers is only one small part of our professional work. In Britain, as in most other parts of the world, there is a growing understanding of the valuable part good, ethical public relations can play in promoting the success and efficiency of organisations of all kinds.

A student studying for a BA Honours degree in public relations spends three years on the theory and practice of a management discipline which is quite unrecognisable in your article. Yours etc,
DAVID GOODALL,
Garrick Club, Garrick Street, WC2,
July 16.

From Mr Michael Collie

Sir, However repugnant we may find Gerry Adams's refusal to condemn the IRA's recent atrocities, it's difficult not to agree with his general analysis (report and leading article, July 15).

By playing politics and refusing to get on with substantive talks without preconditions, the British Government squandered the opportunity created by the IRA's ceasefire. While not condoning their actions in any way, I certainly don't find it too hard to understand their frustration. The de-commissioning of arms was a right

to newspapers is only one small part of our professional work.

In Britain, as in most other parts of the world, there is a growing understanding of the valuable part good, ethical public relations can play in promoting the success and efficiency of organisations of all kinds.

A student studying for a BA Honours degree in public relations spends three years on the theory and practice of a management discipline which is quite unrecognisable in your article. Yours sincerely,
SAM BLACK
(Honorary Professor of Public Relations, University of Strirling),
Kewick House, 3 Greenway, N20,
July 17.

From Mr Matthew Freud

Sir, Your picture caption accompanying Giles Coren's article states that I "often comment as many column inches as [my] clients".

On average, Freud Communications' clients attract over 1,000 column inches per day, whereas my personal total in the last ten years do not add up to 100.

This is perhaps further evidenced by the fact that you were unable to find a photograph of me from the current decade. If anyone is interested, I have put on some weight, but my hairline remains mercifully intact.

Yours faithfully,
MATTHEW FREUD (Chairman),
Freud Communications,
93 Newman Street, W1,
July 17.

Losses at Goose Green

From Mr Philip Neame

Sir, As the commander of D Company, 2 Para, the company that took the heaviest losses at Goose Green (letters, July 12, 15), I particularly wish to rebut the suggestion in the Channel 4 television programme of July 11 that these lives and that of "H" were a needless sacrifice.

The film is beset with fundamental confusion between tactics and strategy. As the senior land force commander, Julian Thompson's view that the battle was not operationally necessary must be given due weight — though the incalculable psychological impact on the Argentines' subsequent will to fight, and the fact it was an operational air base for Pucara ground at-

tack aircraft, should not be underestimated.

However, as Lord Lewin made clear in the programme, there was also a political imperative. As "war is politics by other means", the battle then became strategically essential. This, I believe is the crux of H's contribution. By comparison with those who ordered merely a raid with no specific objectives, and others who were prepared to risk the outcome by foregoing artillery support, H saw clearly that anything short of a definitive and successful outcome could in fact be counter-productive.

Yours sincerely,
PHILIP NEAME,
Blake Cottage, North Waltham,
Basingstoke, Hampshire,
July 12.

Broadcasting opera

From Mr Michael D. Varcoe-Cocks

Sir, I was astounded that Sir Jeremy Isaacs, General Director of the subsidised Royal Opera House (letter, July 13) thinks the initiative for televising operas needs to come from the broadcasters. It should come from him.

There is not the remotest justification for anyone who works at a publicly-funded theatre — unionised or not — to require more money for a broadcast of a performance for which they are already paid, except to the extent that extra work, eg, overtime, is required for the transmission. It would be different if resulting videos and CDs were marketed.

It is outrageous that anyone from superstar to stage hand can effectively prevent broadcasts by holding out for a ransom. I would like it to be a condition of the Arts Council grant that a

minimum of 12 operas (and 12 ballets) be broadcast each season and the contracts for everyone working at Covent Garden include a clause enabling this for no additional fee. If they had to be concerned with only their own costs, surely the television companies would be interested.

There is no reason why this could not be in place when the redevelped house is opened, but Sir Jeremy needs to act now.

Yours faithfully,
M. D. VARCOE-COCKS,
5 Brackenbury Road, W6,
July 13.

Business letters, page 27

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

and firing agenda item for all-party talks, not a necessary pre-condition to them.

Now we have seen the British State supremely cave in to the bigots in orange. John Bruton was spot on with his comments (reports, July 13).

Why shouldn't the nationalist population put their trust in the IRA when the State has so clearly failed them?

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL COLLIE,
2F2 22 William Street, Edinburgh 3,
July 16.

From Dr Graeme K. Matthew

Sir, Whatever the constitutional arrangements for Ulster, there is a pressing need for conciliation between the communities. How does the tradition of the marches square with that?

Ellis O'Hanlon (article, July 11) tells us that the Orange marches used to be seen as a harmless eccentric diversion. It may well be that Sinn Féin has engineered a change in that perception, but it has had powerful material to work on.

You suggest (leading article, July 15) that "the real bigotry is the refusal to understand and empathise with a community which wishes only to remain in the country and is fearful that that right will be overridden". It is not bigotry to acknowledge grounds for offence amongst Catholics in such large scale celebrations of an ancient Protestant victory or in the military and social symbols on display. Ulster Unionists need to know that these things harm their case in Britain and abroad. Moreover it is difficult to see that they have any real practical or political benefit.

Seen from outside, Protestant Ulster has greater strengths, a finer cultural tradition and a better case for insisting on its Britishness than appear in the marches.

Yours sincerely,
G. K. MATTHEW,
Amnis House, Coln St Dennis,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,
July 15.

Howard's 'greasy pole'

From Mr Peter Cadbury

Sir, Bernard Levin would appear to be out of step with public opinion ("Howard's greasy pole", July 12).

Two years ago I resigned from the Conservative Party because I thought the Government was doing too little to combat crime and protect the average household (report, August 30, 1994). At that time almost anyone who tried to apprehend a burglar or a mugger, or even in some cases where they made a "citizen's arrest" for kidnapping, was prosecuted for assault.

Over the last two years, thanks to Michael Howard, more criminals are kept off the streets, fewer are allowed on bail or parole to repeat their offences, and guidelines have been published advising the police not to prosecute innocent citizens for taking the law into their own hands. This must be applauded as a benefit to the law-abiding member of the public.

Prevention is better than conviction, and here again Michael Howard is leading the way in advocating closed-circuit television for areas where crime is prevalent. After the recent atrocities at schools it must make sense to provide CCTV for all schools where there is a risk of an intruder. I personally am presenting CCTV to a few local schools and I only wish I could afford to supply them all.

I know nothing about Michael Howard's ambition to be Prime Minister, but on his recent record I would encourage him to apply.

Yours sincerely,
PETER CADBURY,
Upton Grey Lodge, Upton Grey,
Nr Basingstoke, Hampshire,
July 12.

Cuban liberty

From Mr C. J. Jacob

Sir, In your leading article, "Pigs again" (July 16), you rightly castigate the Helms-Burton Act, that misguided attempt to coerce the international community into supporting United States policy against Cuba.

You are not alone in your censure. Even the Congressional draftsman seems to have expressed contempt for the duty imposed on him, and rather wittily so. Why else give the legislation its mock-Marxist title "Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act", if not for the sake of the deterrent acronym CuL De SaC?

Yours faithfully,
C. J. JACOB,
5 Sycamore Avenue,
Chandlers Ford,
Eastleigh, Hampshire,
July 16.

Who art in Heaven?

From Mr Roger Sydenham

Sir, Your report (July 17) that the Church of England is to remove references to God as male from its prayer book reminds me of an American friend, a Unitarian, who told me that he always prefaced his prayers with "To whom it may concern".

Yours faithfully,
ROGER SYDENHAM,
Ramillies, Friston,
Saxmundham, Suffolk,
July 18.

OBITUARIES

PAUL TOUVIER

Paul Touvier, French war criminal, died in prison in Paris on July 17 aged 81. He was born on April 3, 1915.

A VICHY official with the sombre distinction of being the only Frenchman to have been convicted of crimes against humanity, Paul Touvier was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1994 for ordering the execution of seven Jews in Lyons in 1944. But the manner in which he was able to avoid being brought to justice for so long reopened old wounds in the French psyche as painful as the memory of the crimes he originally committed against his own countrymen.

Although sentenced to death in absentia in 1946 and 1947, Touvier managed, thanks to the French Roman Catholic Church, to escape retribution — often hidden from the public eye in monasteries and other religious houses — for more than forty years. In 1971, under pressure from leading Church officials, President Pompidou even granted him a pardon. But this outraged Jewish and Resistance groups.

When he was finally arrested in 1989, he was held in a Benedictine priory in Nice. It was adjudged that under the French 20-year limitation law he could no longer be re-tried for his war crimes. But like his Gestapo boss Klaus Barbie, who had been jailed in 1987 (and who died in 1991), he was not to find in this limitation an escape from justice. A new charge of "crimes against humanity" was prepared and it was under this that he was finally brought to book in a Versailles courtroom in April 1994.

Like Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyons", Touvier, known as the "Hugman of Lyons", was a relatively petty official. But this was little consolation for the city's inhabitants who suffered such misery under the ministrations of the two men during the war years. While Barbie ran the city's Gestapo, Touvier was head of its Milice, the police force created by the French wartime authorities to help its German counterpart in the work of suppressing resistance and persecuting Jews.

Paul Touvier's father had fought in the First World War and was a passionate admirer of Pétain, defender of Verdun (and later head of the collaborationist Vichy regime). Conservative Catholics, the family were ardent supporters of Action Française, which had been founded in 1899 by the rabidly anti-Semitic writer Charles Maurras in the wake of the Dreyfus case. Brought up in this fanatical atmosphere, Touvier was from an early age imbued with the notion that the Jews were responsible for the death of Christ, and an accused race.

He went to school at the Prado seminary in Lyons but left early having achieved little educationally. Thereafter he had a series of lowly jobs until the outbreak of war in 1939 when he was called up into the Army. His unit was virtually annihilated during the German Blitzkrieg of the following year when it came under Stuka attack.



Touvier under guard in the Versailles courtroom in 1994

Touvier came under suspicion of having deserted but was cleared. In any event this blemish on his record was not held against him when he applied to join the Milice, set up by Pétain to enforce the precepts of "Travail, famille, patrie" which had replaced the French Republic's "Liberté, égalité, fraternité" as the watchword of the puppet Vichy state.

How such an inadequate individual as Touvier came to be appointed head of the Milice for the Lyons and Rhône region is not clear. But he and his family had been enthusiastic recruits to the service from the very first, and doubtless anti-Semitic, anti-republican zeal counted for more in such a job than forensic, administrative and leadership qualities.

As head of the Milice, Touvier was very much the legman for Barbie, hunting down suspects and handing them over to the Gestapo chief's torturers. He was also able to use the Milice as his personal police force, running protection rackets and extorting money from Jewish businesses on pain of denunciation.

Among the crimes he committed at this period were the kidnapping and murder of an elderly Jewish couple, a grenade attack on the congregation of a Lyons synagogue, the torture and deportation to Mauthausen concentration camp of a member of the Resistance, and the sending to Ausch-

witz of another Jewish family. But the crime of which he was eventually convicted was the murder in June 1944 of seven Jews on the orders of the Gestapo, in reprisal for the shooting of a Vichy propaganda chief Philippe Henriot by a member of the Resistance. Touvier was always afterwards to claim that he had negotiated hard with the Gestapo to have the figure of 20-for-20 victims brought down to seven from 30, and that without his strenuous intervention many more deaths might have been required. But this has never been substantiated by independent testimony and given Touvier's persistent anti-Semitism seems unlikely.

With the Liberation many collaborators of Touvier's ilk were summarily dealt with by lynch mobs, but Touvier came under the protection of the mysterious order of the Chevaliers de Notre Dame, a Catholic body which hid him and protected him. Over the next forty years he surfaced occasionally. He was arrested in Paris in 1947 but escaped and fled into hiding again. He was thought to have been moved between monasteries in Savoy and Piedmont. After the lapse of the 20-year limitation which effectively invalidated the death sentence passed on him after the war, he emerged more frequently. When, in 1971, President Pompidou pardoned him and ordered his property to be restored to him, the reason

given was that "The time has come to throw a veil over the period when the French were engaged in hatred, civil strife and even murder."

But the President had widely miscalculated the public mood and Touvier was forced back into hiding when Resistance and Jewish survivors of Vichy persecution brought more evidence of his atrocities into the open. Even so, it was to be almost another twenty years before justice was eventually done. The arrest and conviction of the Nazi Klaus Barbie undoubtedly gave this process some impetus. Why, asked France on that occasion, should a German be the sole scapegoat for crimes in which Frenchmen had also had complicity?

At his trial Touvier expressed no remorse for his crimes. As the repugnant entries in his fairly recent diaries made quite clear, he had remained anti-Semitic to the end. Sentenced to life imprisonment, Touvier had latterly suffered from prostate cancer and his family had twice requested a presidential pardon on the grounds of ill-health. Both requests were refused. Touvier died in the hospital wing of Paris's Fresnes Prison, whose name is infamous for the Vichy and Gestapo brutality visited upon Frenchmen within its walls during the war.

Touvier is survived by his wife Monique, and by a son and daughter of a previous marriage.

SIR DOUGLAS MILLER

Sir Douglas Miller, KCMG, CBE, former colonial educator, died on July 11 aged 89. He was born on July 30, 1906.



DOUGLAS MILLER'S finest hour came in Uganda where, as director of education between 1952 and 1958, he pushed through a rapid programme of expansion for its schools and colleges. Much of the credit must go to the late Sir Andrew Cohen who perceived — ahead of everyone else — the need to prepare the country for independence a decade later. But in Miller he found the ideal chief executive.

Miller had already made his mark in colonial education after coming to Africa in 1930 as superintendent of native education in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). One of the schools he founded in the country's outlying districts was still known in recent years as "Miller's School". Over 6ft 2ins tall and well built, Douglas Miller cut an imposing figure as he strode through the African bush, his bearers strung out behind him carrying tents, fresh water, and piles of textbooks.

In Basutoland (now Lesotho) after the Second World War he became one of the youngest directors of education in the colonial service, before moving to Nyasaland (Malawi) and then to Uganda. Two successive education commissions had identified the country's most pressing needs, which were secondary schools and teacher training colleges. Not only the number of schools but the quality of their staff required urgent upgrading.

Cohen fortunately had the resources to fund the programme. A reserve fund had been thoughtfully established some years previously to support Uganda's vital industries — mainly cotton and coffee — in the event of a sudden world collapse in prices. As it happened, both industries had flourished, allowing the fund to accumulate untouched. With more than £40m in the kitty — a vast sum by African standards forty years ago — it was decided to invest some of this in education.

Miller's strengths lay not so much in his knowledge and understanding of education, as in his political skills and determination. These qualities, however, together with Cohen's own energy and intelligence enabled six fruitful years of high achievement.

But Miller had also won the

admiration and friendship of Sir Evelyn Baring whom he had worked under elsewhere. Baring, by now governor of Kenya, was facing similar problems in Nairobi, particularly over schools for Kenyan Asians. It was he who persuaded Miller to move there in 1958, at a time when independence was clearly on the East African horizon. Initially director of education in Kenya, Miller took over the job of permanent secretary in the following year, then became the colonial minister of education, before retiring and returning to Britain in 1961.

Douglas Sinclair Miller had been brought up against a strong background of education. Born to British parents in Ontario, he was himself the son of a schoolmaster who sent him to Westminster School followed by Merton College, Oxford. Miller took a second class degree in Greats, but was always disappointed not to have come away with a first, which he felt would have rewarded his parents for the sacrifices they had made to send him there. He joined the colonial service on graduation. He was appointed OBE in 1948 and advanced to CBE in 1956.

Instinctively hard working, Miller was despondent after leaving the colonial service on retirement. But then he secured the post of secretary to

the King George Jubilee Trust, set up in 1935 to help young people throughout the Commonwealth and now part of the Prince's Trust. He retired at the age of 65 and was knighted in the following year.

At the same time, however, he accepted the part-time job of industrial adviser to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, encouraging firms to introduce the scheme for young apprentices. With the co-operation of the Home Office, he also extended the scheme to cover a number of young offender institutions. But his own extensive travelling around the country was curtailed, following a bad fall down the steps of Coventry station. He gave up this work, too, 11 years ago.

Miller was not an easy man to know. He had the reputation of being slightly aloof and a stubborn taskmaster. But this was relieved by an irreverent sense of humour — particularly in later years — and he always relaxed with his family at home. No one doubted his strength of will. It was this which enabled him to recover from a major operation for cancer some years ago. His death came suddenly, after a serious fall.

Miller's wife Valerie, whom he married in 1933 after meeting her through badminton, died 18 months ago. He is survived by their daughter.

ENGEL LUND

Engel Lund, folk singer, died on June 15 aged 95. She was born in Reykjavik on July 14, 1900.

PERSUASIVE as a siren, the folk singer Engel Lund seemed possessed of the power to capture the soul of a nation in song. A statuesque figure, her imposing height swathed in dark, unadorned robes, she took command of her audiences, seducing them with the sweetness of her voice. With her hair slicked back, she sometimes looked like some enormous benevolent seal, but

she charmed those who saw her with her ravishing smile. She could perform at a conference, it was said, where delegates of several countries would be present, and each would think that she came from his homeland. She sang, apparently without accent, in twenty languages or more.

Engel Lund was born in Iceland where her father was working as an apothecary, but when she was 11 years old her family moved back to Denmark, their country of origin. It was there that Lund had her musical education. She started with conventional *lieder*, but

began to perform folk music after studying Ravel's work based on Hebrew and Greek folk melodies.

She was mixing art and folk songs in her recitals when, in 1933, in Hamburg, her accompanist fell sick and an aunt recommended she try out a young pianist called Ferdinand Rauter, nicknamed Löwe or Lion. He was to play for her for the next 31 years, working in close partnership with her, though they never became lovers.

Lund's success with folk songs eventually led her to concentrate on them entirely,

and Rauter proved to be not only a superb accompanist but a sensitive arranger. He, like Lund, seemed instilled with a respect for the songs and a sympathy for the milieu from which they arose.

They studied each song, comparing it with other versions, working on it for a year or sometimes two before finally performing it in public. They toured Europe in the 1930s, visiting its Eastern countries as well as France, Germany and Scandinavia. The pair also visited the United States for two successful tours.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, Lund and Rauter settled in England and gave numerous performances, except for a brief period when Rauter was confined, as an enemy alien, to the Isle of Man. But he was freed before long and throughout the 1940s and 1950s performed up to one hundred concerts a year in many different lands.

In 1960, however, she retired and returned to Iceland where she became a professor in Reykjavik. Ostensibly she taught singing, but she was in truth much more interested in teaching diction, movement and dramatic technique. She was treated like a princess in this land of her birth. Numerous honours were bestowed on her and she was even asked to act as First Lady on certain occasions when the wife of President Svein Björnson was indisposed.

Known to her friends as "Gagga", she enjoyed a keen sense of humour and outspoke opinions. She once told Peter Pears that she loved everything about him except his voice. She was a voracious reader and at times appeared to be more interested in literature than in music. But it was in music that she left her indelible mark.

She was unmarried.



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NEED OF CLEANER RIVERS.

Westminster, Monday. The Lords had two interesting discussions. The first arose out of LORD STRACHIE'S indignation with The Times for suggesting that the income of the Empire Marketing Board was the payment of a debt of honour, and did not harm the British producer.

The second debate arose out of LORD MILDMAYS serious warning that the voluntary Committee on River Pollution had practically exhausted its possibilities. Co-operation with the polluters had done much to keep or restore the purity of a source of potential danger to human and animal life, but many streams were still being fouled through ignorance or negligence. Neither the Committee nor the Ministry of Agriculture had any executive power, and although the Fisheries Board had punitive powers, their exercise was difficult, expensive, and it might be ruinous to industry. It was therefore essential to create some central, inter-departmental authority for the whole of our rivers, within the limits of the need for national economy but adequate to the importance of the task. LORD BALFOUR fully agreed with the necessity of the work, but was equally impressed with its difficulty. It was often

ON THIS DAY

July 19, 1927



The Committee on River Pollution had exhausted its possibilities, so the Government set up an advisory committee to "explore the possibilities" of river control and the causes of pollution.

necessary to choose between the purity of a river and the ruin of a factory or a new industry. For example, the effluents from low temperature carbonization, coke ovens, beer sugar, and artificial silk were extremely noxious. The solution was probably research into the proper method of rendering them innocuous, and the Government had already set up a special Committee of experts to co-ordinate, select, and extend the world-wide experiments being carried on in this direction. Complementary to research was administration. The Government had decided to set up an inter-departmental Advisory Committee under SIR HORACE MONRO, which should

explore the possibilities of more harmonious and connected control of rivers, and continue the attempts to deal with certain causes of pollution, such as sewers, for which loans totalling £5,000,000 had been made in a year.

THE RUSSIAN BALLET.

One of the advantages of ballet as a form of art, and still more as a form of entertainment, is its adaptability. Stravinsky's *Song of the Nightingale*, given for the first time in a new guise, that is, with new choreography by Georges Balanchine and costumes designed by Henri Matisse, is transformed. It was originally an opera: then its music was concentrated into a symphonic poem, which was staged as a ballet by the Diaghilev company, and now, while the music remains the same, it appears in a new version in which simplification of the stage mechanism is carried considerably further. If simplification is to be carried out, precision in the movements seems doubly necessary. The courtesies should not hesitate when they form their grotesque patterns, and the audience should not be allowed to hear someone in the wings snapping his fingers to direct the troupe into their places. The technique of the Russian Ballet used to be above the reproach of amateurishness. It is not so now.

ARTS 31-33

Nations united by music: that's the wonder of Womad

EDUCATION 35

A new danger to the sixth form?

SPORT 37-44

Shaq's fortunes soar with \$120m deal in Atlanta

TELEVISION AND RADIO
Pages 42, 43

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY JULY 19 1996

Home loans increase as credit falls

By Robert Miller and Janet Bush

FRESH evidence that the steady recovery in the housing market continues was counter-balanced yesterday by an apparent cooling of demand for other types of consumer credit, suggesting that Britain is not headed for an inflationary consumer boom.

Figures from building societies show that gross and net mortgage advances in June were at their highest level since the end of the stamp duty holiday in August 1992 on a seasonally unadjusted basis. The value of home loans approved by societies last month was £4.1 billion compared with £3.6 billion in June last year. Monthly mortgage lending by banks, however, fell to £604 million in June from £696 million in May.

Based on the housing mar-

ket data now available for the first half of 1996 leading home loan lenders, such as the Halifax and Woolwich building societies, are sticking with their recently increased forecasts for house prices to rise by about 5 per cent over the course of the year. Lenders are so optimistic that the housing market recovery will last that they are already beginning to withdraw many of their deep-discounted special mortgage offers and cash-back deals, some of which were worth up to £9,000.

Adrian Coles, director general of the Building Societies Association, said: "Strength in the consumer side of the general economy coupled with stronger house prices, reported sharp falls in negative equity and lower mortgage

rates after the reduction in base rates in June, are all likely to help to increase confidence."

But Tim Sweeney, director general of the British Bankers' Association (BBA), sounded a note of caution as consumer credit rose by £256 million, significantly down on the previous month's £337 million. Commenting on the lending figures from BBA members Mr Sweeney said: "While mortgage lending was close to the recent monthly average, consumer credit was noticeably less buoyant than of late."

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, is banking on a strong consumer sector to deliver accelerating growth but the latest data is sending mixed signals to the Treasury. The Chancellor forecasts a 4.25 per cent rise in consumer spending next year, following 3.25 per cent this, but he still believes that this will not lead to higher inflation. Most forecasters agree that inflation is set to remain subdued but disagree on the reasons why. Some believe that consumer spending will not be as robust as the Chancellor hopes.

Separate figures from the Bank of England yesterday showed that M4 broad money supply grew by 10 per cent in the year to June, the same year-on-year rate as in May. M4 has been above the Government's monitoring range of 3 to 9 per cent since late last year and was one of the reasons the Bank of England opposed the last quarter-point cut in base rates in June.

But the Treasury put a positive gloss on the figures, saying that M4 growth during the second quarter appeared to have stabilised. Mr Clarke played down the importance of M4 for his deliberations on policy when testifying to the Treasury Select Committee this week. Instead, he highlighted indicators in the real economy that showed sluggish activity and emphasised that he sees no sign of inflation pressures building up.

In his own testimony to the committee, Eddie George, Governor of the Bank, suggested that strong M4 growth is incompatible with the Government's inflation target of 2.5 per cent or less but even he did not suggest that Britain was on the brink of an inflationary boom.

City reaction to the figures was neutral with some arguing that, despite M4, the Chancellor may still cut interest rates after his July 30 meeting with Mr George.

New issues hit by market jitters



Ric Piper, left, and Michael Jeffries are going ahead with the flotation of W S Atkins

Allied opts for low float price

By Sarah Cunningham

ALLIED CARPETS, the leading carpet retailer, yesterday set its flotation price at the lower end of its indicated range, blaming jittery markets for its caution.

The 215p per share price values Allied at £189 million. It had hoped to achieve at least £200 million and had set a range of 205p to 235p. "The final pricing of the offer took place in a very difficult market," said Ray Nethercott, managing director. Share dealings begin next Tuesday.

Small investors took up much less of the offer than had been hoped. Only 57 per cent of the nearly 14 million shares in the intermediaries offer were sold and the difference was taken up by institutions. At the issue price, the proforma historic price/earnings ratio of the issue price is 18.7, which compares favourably with Carpetright, its similarly sized quoted competitor, which is on an historic p/e of 24.

Kleinwort Benson, the lead underwriter for British Biotech's £143 million rights issue, confirmed yesterday that the offering was a flop, with only 49 per cent of shareholders taking up the rights. Kleinwort said that the remainder of the one-for-eight rights issue of 7.25 million new shares had been allocated to the sub-underwriting group. The issue was priced at £20.50 per share, against the closing price of £19.63 on Wednesday, the deadline for acceptances. British Biotech shares rebounded yesterday to close at £21.43. They were £36 in May.

Meanwhile, the £198 million flotation of W S Atkins, the engineering consultancy, is going ahead at 215p a share, valuing the holding of Michael Jeffries, chief executive, at £3 million. Ric Piper, finance director, has 180,000 shares.

Pennington, page 25

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FT-SE 100	3693.4	(+35.2)
FT-SE All share	1532.41	(+14.36)
Nikkei	21586.43	(+153.54)
Dow Jones	6415.72	(+38.84)
S&P Composite	638.86	(+4.79)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	8 1/8%	(8 1/8%)
Yield	6.85%	(7.03%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Life long gilt	10 1/8%	(10 1/8%)
Future (Sep)	10 1/8%	(10 1/8%)

STERLING

New York	1.5485	(1.5480)
London	1.5485	(1.5480)
DM	2.3053	(2.3023)
FF	7.8120	(7.7977)
Sfr	1.8841	(1.8805)
Yen	167.92	(168.40)
£ Index	94.8	(94.8)

DOLLAR

London	1.4883	(1.4880)
FF	8.0339	(8.0295)
Sfr	1.2140	(1.2115)
Yen	107.53	(108.65)
£ Index	94.8	(94.8)

Tokyo close Yen 108.81

London close \$363.78 (\$363.36)

* denotes midday trading price

Fast track

Railtrack, the recently privatised rail and signal operator, is to join the FT-SE 100 index to fill the vacancy created by the merger of Sun Alliance and Royal Insurance. Railtrack celebrated its promotion with a 4 1/2 p rise to 214p.

Markets, page 26

Watched dogs

Energy regulators are to face parliamentary scrutiny during an investigation that could lead to a single regulator rather than separate bodies for electricity and gas.

Page 25

Greenspan stance on inflation helps rally US markets

By Janet Bush, Economics Correspondent

AMERICAN stocks and bonds rallied yesterday after Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, reassured markets that the US central bank would raise interest rates if it seemed that inflation pressures look set to pick up, but did not seem to suggest an imminent tightening of policy.

In his Humphrey Hawkins testimony to Congress, Mr Greenspan said the Fed had become "especially vigilant" about inflation, an emphasis which triggered a rally in Treasury bonds.

He said: "I am confident that the Federal Open Market Committee would move to tighten reserve market conditions should the weight of incoming evidence persuasively suggest an oncoming intensification of inflation pressures that would jeopardise the durability of the economic expansion."

Mr Greenspan said there was considerable uncertainty, and the behaviour of the economy over the next few weeks would be crucial. The Fed had "moved to a level of heightened surveillance" of what is going on because the period ahead is a relatively important one.

The equity market fol-

lowed bonds higher, with some investors encouraged because they did not perceive any urgency about higher rates. In Mr Greenspan's remarks, he said there were early indications that a period of favourable inflation, especially in the labour market, might be drawing to a close. Some felt his language would have been stronger had he expected a rate rise at the next FOMC meeting on August 20.

In mid-session trading, the benchmark Treasury long bond had rallied by about three-quarters of a point to yield 6.97 per cent. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average was nearly 50 points higher at 5,426.45.

The dollar softened again yesterday as foreign exchange dealers interpreted Mr Greenspan's remarks that any tightening in monetary policy may be some way off. At mid-session, it was quoted at DML4995, about half a cent off its earlier high.

In London, shares closed at their best of the day after the bounce in the Dow. The FT-SE 100 finished up 25.2 points at 3,693.4.

Lloyds Chemists fight is expected to resume

By Martin Waller

A BIDDING war is expected to resume today when Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, clears the way for rival offers for Lloyds Chemists, the pharmacy chain.

A series of rising takeover bids for Lloyds, the last valuing it at £650 million, was put on hold in March by a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The bidders are UniChem, British owner of the Moss pharmacies, and Gehe, of Germany, buyer last year of the British pharmaceuticals

business AAH. At the time of the reference, Gehe had made the highest bid, worth £5 a Lloyds share, but UniChem held 10 per cent of Lloyds after a share-buying raid.

Source close to the companies expect Mr Lang's verdict at noon today. The MMC is thought to have recommended letting the bids through, but making the winner sell part of its pharmaceutical wholesaling business.

Pennington, page 25

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Tomkins' loyalty plan faces investor revolt

By Jason Nisse

TOMKINS, the acquisitive conglomerate headed by Greg Hutchings, is facing a rebellion by leading shareholders over its proposal to introduce a long-term loyalty plan rewarding around 50 senior executives up to £260,000 of shares each.

Some large institutional investors have decided to vote against the scheme at Wednesday's shareholders' meeting, and others may follow suit.

The loyalty plan will give any of 50 key executives up to 100,000 shares if they buy the same amount of Tomkins' shares and hold them for seven years. Ian Duncan, Tomkins' finance director, said the company had suffered heavily from other firms headhunting its staff and was introducing the plan to tie in key executives.

The institutions are unhappy that there is no performance threshold that the executives will have to meet to receive those shares. "We are in principle against matching share rewards where there are no performance hurdles," a director of a leading insurance group said. Mr Duncan said a performance threshold had been excluded because



Hutchings: hopes to tie in key staff

the executives would have to borrow large sums to buy the shares at the beginning of the seven years and Tomkins found banks would only lend the money if there was a definite pay-out at the end.

The institutions have also raised worries about the appointment as a non-executive director of Charles Gates, chairman of Gates Corporation, the US group that Tomkins is buying for £753 million. Mr Gates is 75, and most institutions routinely veto the appointment of any director over 70.

Workers win as TBI lands Belfast airport

By Fraser Nelson

TBI, the property group that owns Cardiff airport, is to buy Belfast International Airport for £105 million, making it Britain's largest airport owner after BAA.

The deal will net £18 million for the airport's three executive directors, who invested just £50,000 each in a management buyout from BAA two years ago.

The airport's 137 stakeholding employees, 70 per cent of its workforce, will share £10 million. Some invested as little as £300. Their average payout is expected to be £76,000.

Mercury Asset Management, which backed the buyout with a £16.4 million investment, will sell its majority stake to TBI for £57 million, to be paid in cash and shares. MAM is to retain the shares, making it TBI's second largest shareholder with an 11.5 per cent stake.

Keith Brooks, TBI's chief executive, said the group would invest heavily in the airport, opening new commercial outlets to generate more passenger spending. He added that he intended to attract more international flights by using the group's existing links with

four operators at Cardiff airport. Under TBI's ownership, Cardiff airport increased its operating profit by 63 per cent to £5.2 million in 11 months, lifting turnover 11 per cent to £14.5 million. Mr Brooks said he intended to achieve the same growth at Belfast.

TBI's shares rose 1p to 73 1/2p yesterday, as it also reported financial results significantly ahead of analysts' predictions. In the year to March 31, its property portfolio grew 78 per cent to £190 million, swelled by the £98 million worth of property from its £43 million acquisition of Molyneux Estates. Rental income rose by 71 per cent to £16.3 million and it raised £30 million from the 13 properties it sold during the year.

Overall, group pre-tax profits rose 146 per cent to £10.1 million, beating forecasts of £6.1 million. Credit Lyonnais Laing is forecasting a further 78 per cent growth in pre-tax profits to £18 million next year. The final and total dividend was 1p (0.18p), paid from earnings which doubled to 2.93p per share (1.40p).

Temps, page 26

□ Ruling due on Lloyds bids □ Choppy waters for new share issues □ Vital poll draws nearer for builder

Awaiting Dr Lang's prescription

ONE of the few areas still labouring under the sort of heavy-handed state supervision taken for granted 40 years ago is the complicated route between drug manufacturer and that useful little shop across from the doctor's surgery. The Government would love to deregulate, but the country's 9,000 independent pharmacies like things as they are, thank you, and there are few votes in making life more difficult for frail pensioners and sickly toddlers.

Today Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, should rule on the Monopolies and Mergers Commission's four-month inquiry into the competing bids for Lloyds Chemists. Mr Lang has been a tad unpredictable of late, but he is likely to follow the MMC's line and allow a resumption of the bidding war.

As a result, either Gehe of Germany, which owns the British business AAH, or UniChem, owner of the Moss chain of pharmacies, will own Lloyds by the end of this year. The country's second biggest drugs retailer will be under new management. The prospects, thereafter, for those pensioners and toddlers are more uncertain.

The MMC reference in March was a shock because both bidders had privately indicated they would do anything they were asked. It is marginally easier to open a pub than be granted a licence to open a pharmacy, as the policy has been to ensure a hidden subsidy by allowing only one in a given area. Licences change hands for up to £500,000, and Lloyds has 920 of them. If UniChem wins its total will outstrip the 1,200 held by Boots, the market leader. AAH would end up neck and neck.

But it is not the retail business that is bothering the MMC. The two bidders have a quarter or more of the wholesaling market, and Lloyds another 5 per cent. This is also regulated, wholesalers receiving a 12½ per cent margin on the drugs they buy, four fifths of this passed on to the retailer. There are areas of the country where the two overlap with Lloyds. The fear has been that in places where one or other becomes sole supplier on taking out Lloyds, some of that margin

may stay with the wholesaler. Mr Lang, therefore, is likely to insist on sales of depots to independents to prevent such local monopolies. Fair enough; but there is a danger the retail aspect may be overlooked. Those licences are entirely portable. There must be some temptation, once Lloyds is bodded down, to move run-down or struggling local pharmacies to more upbeat retail sites — perhaps rather further from the surgery than those pensioners and toddlers can comfortably totter.

Price must be right at Somerfield

THIS is the worst possible market for issuing new shares. Wild daily swings on the FT-SE, driven entirely by the state of Wall Street and a few obscure high-tech stocks, engender a cautious approach on the part of those asked to put up the cash a few days in advance.



shareholders can be permitted a wry smile here. But Somerfield, the food retailer that seems to change its name with every fresh delivery from the warehouse, may just be about to be caught in Energy's fallout.

Allied Carpets started with hopes of commanding a market value of £250 million, conceded last month that perhaps £200 million was more like it, and yesterday had to settle for a comparatively slim £180 million. Small investors, perhaps with their fingers burnt by Jarvis Hotels and then by British Energy itself, stayed away, and only around half of the Allied

shares intended for them were taken up. The slack was taken up by the City, and the issue was comfortably oversubscribed. Contrast British Biotech, where even the City was not prepared to take a longer view. But if the well-respected Allied Carpets, even on a conservative pricing range, cannot grab Sid's fancy, what hope is there for Somerfield, which must lie on any range of assessed risk somewhere between the two?

The food chain wants to sell 20 per cent of its shares to the retail market. Why should Sids restrain themselves in the face of Allied only to hurdle into the arms of the frankly less attractive Somerfield? This is not the time for over-confidence or for trying to brazen it out in the market. Allied Carpets is getting away with it because it has decided to be realistic about price. After Iceland's profit warning on Wednesday and Allied's realism, Somerfield had better start thinking again about whether any small shareholders will

want to buy in its £80-100p range, or whether it will suffer the humiliation of falling short. But then unlike Ray Nethercott of Allied, David Simons, Somerfield's chief executive, has a £5 million-plus bonus riding on success of the float.

Shaky foundations at Costain

BY MONDAY lunchtime one of the most historic names in British construction may be heading for the breaker's yard. The fate of Costain depends upon a weekend of brinkmanship, and the mathematics of Monday's extraordinary meeting are stacked against the company. The two biggest shareholders, with 19 per cent each, say they will reject the refinancing plan. This would reduce debt to manageable levels, but it would also effectively strip existing investors of three shares out of every four they hold. If the dissidents hold firm, Costain must achieve an 80

per cent vote of all shareholders to have any chance of success. The only question is whether they really want to pull the temple roof down on everyone, because the only alternative is the receivers.

If Costain survives, even more startling will be the survival of its Telford-based deputy chairman, Peter Costain. As the last family board member, he has presided over the raising and subsequent loss of £160 million of shareholders' money over the past half decade. Yet the refinancing includes a change in the articles of association to allow him to stay on. With his powers of persuasion, perhaps Mr Costain should be in charge of negotiations with the rebel shareholders.

Hedge fund

OUR pensions are in safe hands. A fund manager, wishing to remain nameless, called yesterday to voice horror over United Utilities' long-term incentive plan, which faces a vote at the annual meeting next week. "Our clients are unhappy. They feel it is overgenerous and based on the wrong performance criteria. That is why we have decided to... abstain." Makes you despair, doesn't it?

Super regulator for energy tops inquiry agenda

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND ERIC REGULY

ENERGY regulators are to face parliamentary scrutiny in a wide-ranging investigation that could lead to a single regulator rather than separate bodies for electricity and gas.

MPs on the Trade and Industry Select Committee will call Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, and Clare Spottiswoode, his counterpart in gas, to give evidence in a major review of regulatory practice. While concentrating on the energy regulators, it is thought that the review will also embrace Ofel.

MPs will start work on the inquiry in October and it is expected it will take several months to complete. The agenda of the select committee, chaired by Labour's Martin O'Neill, has yet to be finalised but the feasibility of a super regulator, as opposed to individual specialised regulators, is thought to be a prime consid-

eration. The investigation comes as three regulators are already grappling with turbulent times. A Monopolies and Mergers Commission referral for British Gas seems inevitable with Ofgas's final pricing proposals for its pipeline division expected next week. Ms Spottiswoode's proposals to curb revenues by about £850 million next year, which could deliver a £30 cut in household bills, provoked an angry reaction from British Gas and its shareholders.

Ofel is also set to trigger an MMC inquiry. At BT's annual meeting in Newcastle yesterday, Sir Iain Vallance, chairman, said the company was "at a critical stage in its dealings with Ofel" and called for a legislative solution to disagreements over what powers Ofel should have to determine, and put an end to, business practices it deems to be anti-competitive.

In a letter sent to BT last night, Ofel essentially pre-

sented the company with a take-it-or-leave-it regulatory package. The package reduces the price cap to the inflation rate, less 4½ per cent, against the current RPI-X per cent, and remains firm on the anti-competitive clause.

Professor Littlechild is at the centre of a storm over the progress of competition in domestic electricity. Yesterday the electricity pool, the industry's wholesale market, endorsed a report that roundly criticised Ofel, his office, for its role in the plan to bring choice to 23 million households. The report, by the pool auditor, said that competition could fail or significantly lag its 1998 deadline.

Figures from the Gas Consumers Council yesterday showed complaints against British Gas are still increasing. In the first six months of the year complaints rose 39 per cent to 25,133 in comparison with the first half of last year.

Hi-Tec steps up recovery

BY CLARE STEWART

RECOVERY at Hi-Tec Sports, the sports footwear manufacturer, took another step forward after a strong rise in profits in the year to April. Pre-tax profits came in at £2 million, compared to a £125 million loss for the previous 15-month period.

Frank van Wazer, chairman, said the improvement was achieved in spite of difficult trading conditions in

Britain and America. "We expect the current year to remain highly competitive," he added.

Although turnover on a 12-month like-for-like basis fell from £101 million to £93 million, operating profits rose from £3 million to £4.4 million. Earnings were 2.5p a share (26.5p loss), but the company is not yet ready to restore the dividend. The shares fell 1p to 44p.

Budgie lifts Sleepy Kids

BY CLARE STEWART

BUDGIE the Helicopter continues to whip up profits for Sleepy Kids, the animation and merchandising group.

The cartoon character created by the Duchess of York, helped half-year pre-tax profits to rise 7 per cent to £325,081, while group turnover rose 29 per cent to £950,925. After its first ever dividend of 0.1p last year, Sleepy Kids is not making an interim payout. However,

Martin Powell, chairman, said it does intend to pay a final dividend this year.

Budgie has now been sold to 70 countries, and more than 130 merchandising deals have been signed. Budgie and Transylvania Pet Shop, another Sleepy Kids property, are attracting top viewing figures in the UK. In June, the new series of Transylvania Pet Shop drew more than 1.6 million viewers.

Lloyd's picks Maltby for Equitas post

COLIN MALTBY, former chief executive of Kleinwort Benson Investment Management, has been appointed chief executive officer of Equitas, the £7 billion reinsurance company set up by Lloyd's of London. Tony Richards, 47, becomes group financial controller.

Mr Maltby, 45, will supervise the fund management groups chosen to manage Equitas's investment portfolio. The UK groups are BZW Investment Management; Mercury Asset Management; PDM; and Prudential Portfolio Managers, who will each manage assets of between £500 million and £1 billion.

The American groups include Scudder, Stevens & Clark and Zurich Investment Management.

Deals boost for healthcare sector

BY ERIC REGULY

DEALS agreed yesterday by Cantab and Biocompatibles helped to lift the spirits of the battered emerging pharmaceuticals and healthcare sector.

Shares of Cantab, a Cambridge company that specialises in immunology, rose 68p to 663p after it formed a collaboration with SmithKline Beecham to develop and market Cantab's so-called TAGW vaccine for genital warts.

Cantab said that it could potentially receive £24 million in licence and milestone payments under the vaccine agreement.

It will receive £7 million up front, divided between licence fees of £3 million and an equity investment of £4 million in the form of 471,000 new shares at a subscription

price of £8.50. The investment is equal to 3 per cent of the company's equity. Cantab may receive up to £17 million more if certain development milestones under the agreement are achieved.

SmithKline, in return, receives exclusive worldwide development, manufacturing and marketing rights to the TAGW products. Biocompatibles signed a two-year agreement with Cryolife of Marietta, Georgia, to apply Biocompatibles' coatings technology to porcine and human heart valves.

Biocompatibles will receive an initial payment of \$100,000 under the agreement, followed by up to \$1.5 million in milestone payments. The company's shares rose 5p to 400p.

Property group buys Island Site for £31m

Shaftesbury looks west

BY CARL MORTIMSD

SHAFTESBURY, the property group that owns the Chinatown Estate in London, is expanding its empire westwards with the £31 million purchase of the Island Site adjacent to the Trocadero leisure centre.

The deal is being financed with a one-for-two rights issue priced at 125p to raise £29.2 million. Shares in the property group fell 1p to 147p on news of the cash call.

The Island Site is owned by Rupert Street Investments, a company that went into receivership along with the Trocadero in 1993. KPMG appointed Shaftesbury as project manager in February 1993. The 24 restaurants and shops on the site were then



Lane: £20m reinvestment

1993 had about £55 million outstanding on the site.

Bounded by Shaftesbury Avenue to the North, the Trocadero to the West, Coventry Street to the South and Chinatown to the East, the properties will increase Shaftesbury's West End holdings to about 80 per cent of the group's portfolio.

Jonathan Lane, chief executive of Shaftesbury, said the emphasis would increase with the planned £20 million sale of the group's non-London properties and reinvestment in Chinatown, Covent Garden and Carnaby Street.

Rental income from the Island Site totals £1.79 million, but, relet at market rates, it could rise to £2.5 million.

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Job Title

Company Address

Postcode

Telephone

Business Sector

Number of Employees

under 50 ☐ 50-250 ☐ over 250 ☐

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

British Biotech bounces back with 180p surge

SHARES of British Biotech bounced back with a rise of 180p to £21.43 after the rumour of £143 million rights issue was more than 12 times oversubscribed.

The remaining shares were placed with various institutions at £19.50 after the price dipped below the rights terms of £20.50. Brokers said British Biotech had become the victim of a classic bear raid in the past week, with speculators happy to sell the price lower. Many of those bears are still uncovered and, now that the unwanted shares have been placed, may scramble to cover their positions, forcing the price still higher. Only last month the shares touched a high of almost £30, but fell sharply after the company announced the terms of its rights issue.

Despite its popularity British Biotech has yet to make a penny profit. But hopes are high for Marimastat, its pancreatic cancer treatment, which is about to enter phase three clinical trials. The shares are due to be sub-divided later in the year.

Cantab Pharmaceutical celebrated its link-up with SmithKline Beecham to develop and market a new vaccine for genital warts with a rise of 65p to 66.5p. SmithKline, up 4p at 67.5p, is also reckoned to have taken out options in Cantab shares.

Elsewhere, Chiroscience rose 25p to 340p and Cortec International 13p to 282p. But first-time dealings in Alzyme received a lukewarm reception. Offered at 60p on the Alternative Investment Market, shares in the biotech company opened at 58p and slipped to close at 55p, a discount of 8p on the day.

ML Laboratories celebrated news of its first profits ever with a jump of 7p to 36p. The surplus of 183,105 compared with a loss last year of £1.4 million and was achieved on tripled sales. The group has signed a marketing deal with Medeva worth £70 million.

The rest of the equity market closed at its best of the day, cheered by comments made by Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve chairman, to Congress. He sees the US economy slowing to a sustainable pace in the second half of the year and seems reluctant to raise US interest rates.

His comments had a positive effect on share prices on both sides of the Atlantic, with



Oil shares strengthened on fears of a terrorism revival

The Dow Jones climbed more than 50 points in early trading. London followed suit with the FT-SE 100 index ending the session 35.2 points up at 3,693.4. Total turnover was less than 600 million shares.

Railtrack celebrated its elevation to the top 100 companies that make up the index with a rise of 4p at 214p. It fought off opposition from

Lucas Industries, up 5p at 210p. Premier Farnell, unchanged at 62.5p, Compass, steady at 56p, Securicor, 1p lighter at 25p, and Hays, down 5p at 44.5p. It follows the merger of Sun Alliance and Royal Insurance.

Takeover favourite Lasso attracted renewed support with the price climbing 7p to 180p after finally clinching its Algerian production deal. It

covers wells in two oilfields located in block 404 in the Ghadames Basin. As part of the deal Lasso made plans for the design and construction of stage one production facilities in the two fields.

Oil shares generally benefited from a firmer crude price on world markets, with traders taking the view that North Sea supplies may be boosted

in the building sector, climbed 19p to 419p and RMC Group 24p to £10.41.

Iceland continued to reel from this week's profits warning with the price down a further 4p at 114p.

Motor World surged 65p to 285p after learning of the terms of an agreed £48.1 million bid from Finelast, down 7p at 285p. The automotive parts distributor is offering 75 new shares for every 73 Motor World shares, valuing the deal at around 295p a share.

Record profits during the first six months and optimistic noises about the rest of the year lifted Sleepy Kids 4p to 26p. The group, which has the rights to *Budgie the Little Helicopter* series, created by the Duchess of York, is not paying an interim dividend but expects to make a final payment.

A cautious trading statement and profits setback left Jones Stroud 28p lower at 420p, while a profits warning left Telematrix nursing a loss of 18p at 53p.

Over on AIM first-time dealings in Life Numbers rang the right note with investors opening at 12p and eventually closing at 14p following a placing by Gerrard Vivian Gray.

CANTAB PHARMACEUTICAL SHARES RALLY ON NEWS OF JOINT VENTURE



Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul

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MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday): Dow Jones 7157.72 (+38.94) S&P Composite 638.86 (+1.76)

Tokyo: Nikkei Average 21566.42 (+157.54)

Hong Kong: Hang Seng 10711.24 (+102.14)

Amsterdam: Euronext 529.40 (+2.29)

Sydney: All Ordinaries 2119.00 (+23.50)

Frankfurt: DAX 2506.22 (+4.03)

Singapore: Straits Times 2190.95 (+13.08)

Brussels: CAC 40 5242.14 (+59.19)

Paris: CAC 40 5242.14 (+59.19)

Zurich: SMI 2000 2007.26 (+12.15)

London: FT 100 3693.4 (+35.2) FT 250 2850.0 (+6.5) FT 1000 181.8 (+1.4)

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TEMPUS Feet on the ground

TBI is rapidly turning into an airports group with a sideline in property investment. After yesterday's agreement in Belfast, the company could soon be earning half of its profits from airports, making TBI unrecognisable as the small Welsh property group which reversed into Markheath in 1994.

The shift into transport has been good for shareholders; in spite of having no experience operating airports, TBI has accelerated the pace of growth at Cardiff, raising commercial spend per passenger by 23 per cent in the space of a year and boosting airport profits by 63 per cent.

TBI's strategy is to repeat the success of BAA in driving up retail income in airports. The regional airports have the attraction of growing from a relatively low traffic base and commercial spend. They are also growing

faster — some 8-10 per cent a year compared with 4-5 per cent in the congested airports in the South East. Unlike Cardiff, Belfast International is mainly a domestic airport with only 24 per cent of traffic from international chartered operations. The challenge for TBI will be to bring some of the charter traffic that disappears to Dublin or Gatwick back to Belfast, while at the same time boosting the meagre £1.93 per passenger generated from shops, bars and duty-free. That compares with more than £4 at Cardiff.

There must be a risk that Belfast will suffer an economic setback from the collapse of the peace talks but over the past ten years the airport has grown at a compound rate of 8 per cent a year. Compared with the cyclical property sector, currently dull as ditchwater, that sort of growth deserves a premium rating.

Wolsey

WOLSELEY has been one of the more bizarre casualties of the recent fallout in the US market but the collapse in its share price looks more like an opportunity than a cause for concern.

The market gave the builder's merchant a hammering because Wolsey generates some 40 per cent of its operating profits from North America with an important presence in the hot Carolinas construction market.

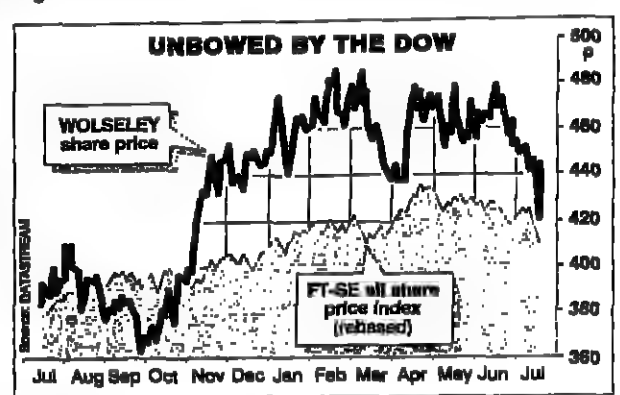
That fails to explain the slump in the shares occasioned by jitters on Wall Street over technology stocks. Wolsey may arguably be at risk from an interest rate rise. Concern over an increase in wage inflation has kept the US long bond yield on the rise and investors feared a reaction by the Federal Reserve

Board in the form of an

increase in short-term rates. That could still happen, although yesterday's message from the Fed was read differently by bond and equity investors, with the latter taking the bullish view that rates will not go up in the short term.

But those investors worrying that the Carolinas build-

ing boom is coming to an end should remember that the US is not just one housing market. The recovery is only beginning in California and Wolsey also has important interests in the North West. Meanwhile in the UK, housing transactions are beginning to accelerate. The gloom is overdue.



Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul

Motor World

WHEN it comes to selling clutch cables and windscreen wipers there are two companies that matter. Armed with the Finelast distribution power, Motor World is now a much stronger competitor to Halfords.

The deal also puts Motor World in a better position to take over a large slice of the 80 per cent of the market currently in the hands of independent retailers.

Motor World already operates more than 330 stores — compared with 180 when it was floated in 1993 — and a large part of its expansion is because of its purchase last year of the Charlie Brown outlets.

The combined businesses will be retaining the know-how of Finelast's chairman Chris Swan, who at one time worked with Halfords. That looks promising and gives the combined group a better chance of delivering the synergistic benefits of integrat-

ing a distributor and retailer.

The market has been tough — with the National Lottery blamed for less spending by consumers on patching up their old bangers. At the same time cars are becoming more reliable, requiring less expenditure on maintenance.

However, the good news for all motor parts companies is that there are more and more cars coming on the roads.

The bad news for the independents is that Halfords and Motor World would like to do to them what Tesco and Sainsbury have already done to small grocers. Prices may come down but there will be less choice: a good outlook for Motor World.

SkyNet

FOR anyone who found an investment in British Biotech too dull, SkyNet Corporation offers an alternative punt. Only founded in February, the maker of tracking systems to find stolen cars joined

the Ofex market in June with

a price of 28.5p. The price is now 250p and SkyNet plans to move to AIM at the end of next month.

Yesterday it announced a deal with European Telecom, which proudly calls itself a leading international distributor of cellular telephones. European Telecom is marketing SkyNet 2000, SkyNet's satellite tracking system which ties in with people's mobile phones. So long as SkyNet moves to AIM, European Telecom has agreed to sell 40,000 of these devices a year for the next three years. This only leaves SkyNet needing to sell another 44,000 to hit its target of 48,000 a year.

Of course SkyNet has not made a penny of profit, nor is it likely to do so for a while. SkyNet may be a great company with a great product, but investors should handle the shares with asbestos gloves.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE			
Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
100-101.00	100-101.00	100-101.00	100-101.00
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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Herts and minds

SIR Ian MacLaurin, chairman of Tesco, is to be congratulated on his appointment as the next chancellor of the University of Hertfordshire. Sir Ian, who went straight from Malvern College into National Service, and then to Tesco as a management trainee, never went to university. But as something of a celebrity in his home county, he is said to be delighted with the invitation from his local school of learning, which is sandwiched neatly between two giant Tesco supermarkets. Sir Brian Corby, former chairman of the Prudential and another Herts man, is standing down as chancellor after three years.

WALLS have ears in Chinatown. In the run-up to esbury's rights issue, announced yesterday, Jonathan Lane, chief executive, made the mistake of missing his daily visit to tenants on the Chinatown Estate. "The Chinese noted my absence," he explains. "They said you must be busy, you must be up to something." Next time, Mr Lane promises not to let the City interrupt his constitutional down Gerrard Street.

Open all hours

IT'S good to talk, but surely not to your boss at the weekend? J Rothschild Assurance must think so. It has issued all the home, fax, mobile and car phone numbers of its senior staff. At any time, anyone at the 1,000-strong company can put a call into senior management, including Sir Mark Weinberg, chairman, to discuss a problem out of office hours. A spokesman said: "It's all part of the culture. It's called the no-hiding policy."



"Now Railtrack has really arrived"

Launch date

THE adviser to the Association for the Monetary Union of Europe, Christopher Johnson, a former chief economic adviser to Lloyds Bank, was struggling yesterday to gather guests for the launch of his latest pro-European propaganda. In spite of the tube strike, various MPs, including Hugh Dykes and John MacGregor, made it to the launch of *In With the Euro, Out With the Pound*. But where was Sir Ted Heath, the guru who gushes on the back of the new book: "Everyone who cares about the economic well-being of the United Kingdom should read it?" At the Savoy, of course, celebrating his 80th birthday.

Peddalling a line

THE tube strike yesterday wasn't going to get in the way of Alex Sandberg, chairman of College Hill. To make sure PR clients Robert Walters and WS Atkins made it to the market without a hitch, Sandberg cycled from his home in Putney to Gresham Street. In the Seventies, he used to distribute press releases around the City from the saddle of a monkey bike. After yesterday's journey, made in 39 minutes, Sandberg boasted to colleagues that he could easily have completed it under half an hour, had he wanted to arrive hot and bothered.

MORAG PRESTON

CBI limbers up for election intent on running in neutral

Philip Bassett says business knows what it wants from government but is keen to avoid party games

Business is firing its starting-gun for the general election. Polling day may be nine months away, but the Confederation of British Industry's move this week, setting out its priorities for the election, does no more than formalise what business leaders have been mulling over: what UK business wants from an incoming government.

"We all know there's going to be a Labour government. It's just that we can't say so," the speaker is a senior businessman, a director with responsibilities for the government relations of a major privatised utility. Such private musings are now the common currency of business's political talk. Tony Blair may endlessly warn his party against electoral complacency, but for much of business and the City a Labour victory is already factored in. CBI leaders wriggle uncomfortably on the point when questioned at the launch of their glossy manifesto, *Prospering in a Global Economy*. Such a determinedly non-political title was reflected in their parrying of attempts to get them to declare their preference in party terms — though there are many, in the Conservative Party and among CBI backwoodsmen, who regard the declaration of political neutrality in the run-up to the election as a politically partisan act, pulling business away from what they feel is its natural role of supporting the Conservatives.

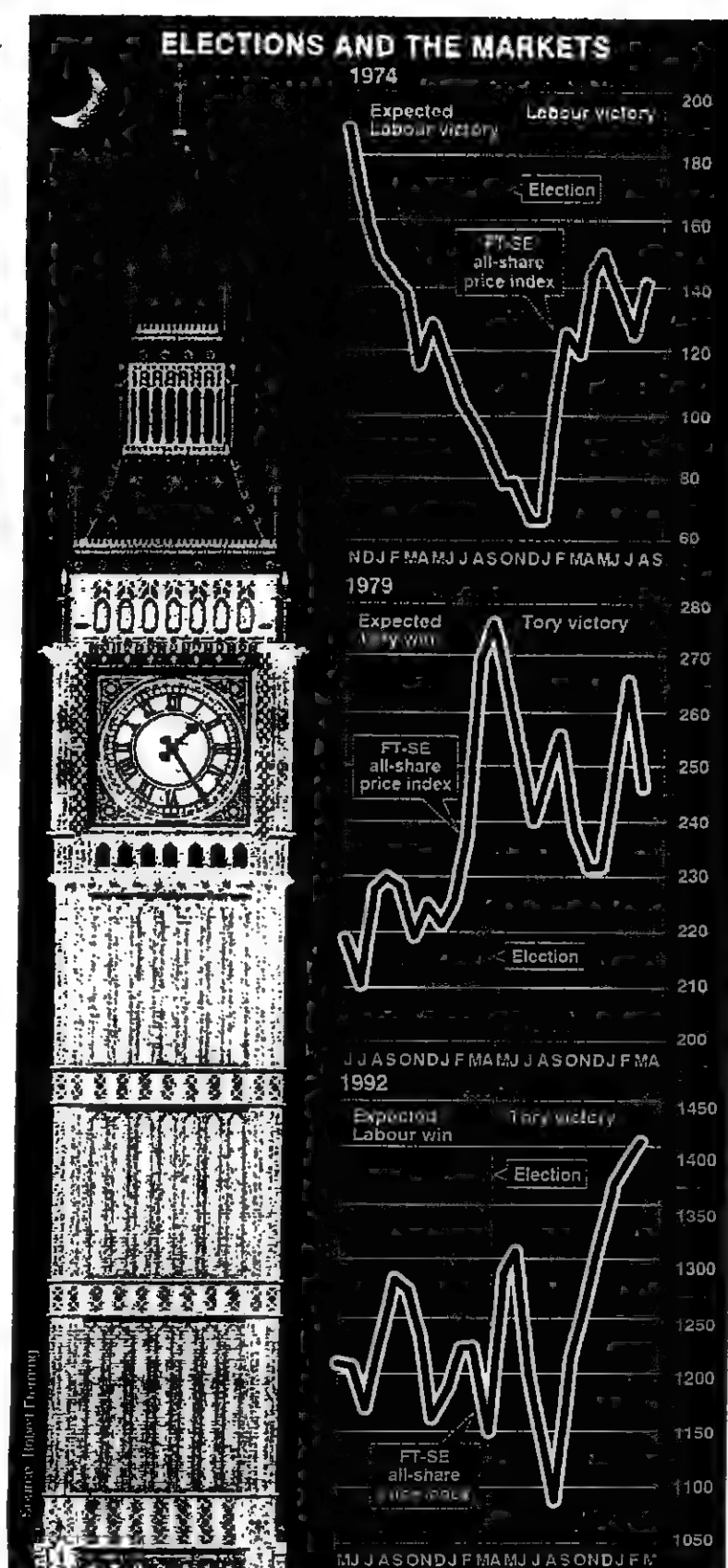
That the CBI's declaration happened to coincide with a successful address to its conference last autumn by Mr Blair only served to deepen such suspicions, and led Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, to insist openly that business had no business to sit on the fence politically.

CBI leaders are now trying to say that Mr Lang did not say that the CBI should take sides, only that companies should not, so it is worth reproducing exactly what he did say: "We have now before us an unprecedented opportunity for continued growth and prosperity," he told the CBI conference in Birmingham last November 14. "You cannot afford not to take sides. Let us continue to work together, we in Government and you in the CBI and in business, to make sure we seize that opportunity."

Pretty clear stuff, but faced with such overt pressure, the CBI has refused to buckle, and is intent under Adair Turner, its Director-General, in maintaining political neutrality, even if that is proving a strain for its current president, Sir Colin Marshall, chairman of British Airways, one of the Conservatives' favourite companies. CBI insiders remain concerned that Sir Colin could still queer the pitch of political neutrality before an election, though at the confederation's business manifesto launch he was a model of political evenness. However, at the CBI's annual dinner in May, he managed, with an election due inside 12 months, to hope publicly that John Major would be the guest speaker as Prime Minister, two years hence.

Of course, such views reflect a widespread business sentiment. Just because business largely judges that Labour will win the forthcoming election, it doesn't mean that business wants Labour to win. It doesn't; but its best guess is that Labour will win. Privately, most business leaders accept that a Blair-led Labour government would be very far from the ravaging beast that previous Labour administrations have been perceived as being.

But balanced judgments such as these won't stop business leaders who



are key political animals — Lord Hanson, Lord Sheppard and others — coming out and endorsing the Conservatives, as did 43 prominent business leaders from companies such as Tesco, Kingfisher, Taylor Woodrow, Dixons, Tarmac and BA, before the 1992 poll. Many companies have either stopped making political donations to the Tories, or make them to Labour and the Liberal Democrats as well. Such overt political neutrality, while clearly viewed by some like Mr Lang

and others as a betrayal, should extend to policy, too, according to the CBI. The CBI's document contains no specific pledge on political neutrality but does suggest that key aspects of the running of the economy should move into that ground: "Ultimately, the management of macroeconomic policy must become politically uncontroversial. In an ideal world, election results would not affect the fundamental economic background against which business plans." Politicians,



John Major or Tony Blair: business is steering clear of a public endorsement

whose product is change, would reject such an idea, and City analysis of the markets and elections suggests that it is a hope unlikely to be realised.

The graphic by Robert Fleming, drawn from an analysis of the performance of the markets around general elections over the past 30 years, details market performance at the last election, and the last two at which Labour and the Conservatives respectively won, and suggests that elections do have an impact on the economy.

The CBI's launch of its manifesto may be a touch early. As Peter Warburton, of Robert Fleming, says: "Looking at past election periods, the market only takes the election seriously, when it is about three months away. Before that it tends to ignore it." But other business bodies are readying themselves to follow suit: the Institute of Directors, the British Chambers of Commerce, EEF, the engineering employers, the Institute of Management and the Industrial Society among others are busily drafting pre-election statements, which will present the main political parties with a clear agenda of business's political objectives.

Inevitably, all of them will be broadly similar. No business organisation is likely to be arguing that what business really needs is a good dose of wildly unstable macroeconomic policy. So what will be of close interest — to the political parties in particular — will be seeing how close, in nuance, language and tone, each business organisation comes to a particular political party, either on individual issues or, more importantly, in overall terms.

By this measure, the CBI's document is almost uncannily neutral: a quick count of its major recommendations shows four supporting key Conservative lines, four Labour and a clutch of eight backing policies common to both main parties. Given its free-market principles, the IoD is likely to be less so, especially on such key issues as EMU, to which the institute, though it has moved closer to the political and business mainstream, remains resolutely opposed.

Europe is a key issue for Britain's managers, according to the Institute of Management's draft proposals, which emphasise "constructive engagement" with the EU by the UK Government. In their manifesto to come in mid-September, EEF leaders, along with the CBI, IoD, and most other business organisations, will reject Labour's plans to sign the European social chapter and to introduce a statutory national minimum wage.

While none will be avowedly Conservative, the distance of many from key Conservative policies, and especially in their phrasing and intonation, is marked. That may be because, according to his critics, Mr Blair has adopted management-speak jargon, with which business is comfortable. It may be, too, an insurance policy: having long ignored Labour, business does not much want to find itself on the wrong end of the argument when the election merry-go-round stops.

But it may well also be because business is increasingly judging that it is a Labour, rather than a Conservative, government with which it will have to deal. Business judges that if the Tories do win again, even a Government refreshed by a further election victory will find it difficult to shake off its tiredness and fully reinvigorate itself. Acute business leaders think that may require a period in opposition, a bout of blood-letting and a new leader — and a hope that some solution to the fundamental fissure over Europe can be found.

Business believes that however moderate a new Labour government, especially a New Labour government, would be, its election would mark a decisive break with the past two decades. In that sense, the importance of the forthcoming election cannot be overstated; and so business is probably far from wrong in firing its election starting pistol now.

Former lord of the skies faces grim battle to keep up revival

Disaster could see TWA follow

Pan Am route, says Eric Reguly

Trans World Airlines and Pan Am were America's imperial airlines. They were the first to criss-cross the oceans, sending businessmen, politicians, soldiers and tourists to Europe's grand cities and the remotest outposts of Asia and Africa. They were the symbol of a flourishing post-war nation.

Although the name survives with a different airline, Pan Am, whose Key West-to-Havana flights in the late 1920s launched America's international service, is now gone. Its market share began to ebb in the 1960s and stiff competition, coupled with recessions and fuel crises, left it all but grounded by the mid-1980s.

Then came Lockerbie. A bomb destroyed the public's confidence in the airline's security systems. Pan Am's jets turned into flying echo chambers overnight.

Wednesday night's crash off Long Island of a TWA Boeing 747 carrying 229 passengers and crew has the

tion-mad billionaire, from 1939 to 1966. The airline initially thrived under Hughes, who ensured it had the newest technology, including pressurised cabins and four-engined aircraft that could cross the Atlantic. TWA and Pan Am began to feel the effects of competition in the 1960s — when every developing nation put a flag-carrier into the air and demanded US landing rights — but managed to keep their imperial pretences into the early 1970s, when they became the launch customers of the jumbo 747.

In spite of all the competition, soaring fuel prices and intransigent unions, TWA and Pan Am might have managed better in the 1970s and 1980s if they had overcome one glaring weakness — the lack of a substantial domestic system to feed their international routes. Pan Am had no domestic "hub", while TWA had a relatively small one in St Louis.

The three carriers with the most expansive hub networks — American, United and Delta — were able to evolve into huge carriers, giving them the money to buy international routes from the likes of TWA, Pan Am and Eastern, another carrier that collapsed a few years ago. Mr Icahn, best known for his threats to take over Texaco and Phillips Petroleum, spotted TWA in 1984. He liked the recognition



Hughes: airline thrived

ed on the verge of staging a remarkable comeback after surviving two bankruptcies since 1992. Only a few months ago, when TWA was celebrating the 50th anniversary of its first transatlantic flight, Jeffrey Erickson, president, announced that the airline had posted an operating profit of \$25 million in 1995, its first since 1989. Plans were made to buy or lease new Boeings, and Erickson even contemplated a new equity offering to repay part of its \$1.2 billion debt.

TWA's fortunes more or less mirrored Pan Am's since the 1930s. Both airlines have rich heritages, ruled the air corridors for decades and went on to stage incredible shrinking acts in a desperate effort to survive. The carriers were gutted and TWA then had the misfortune of falling into the hands of Carl Icahn. Wall Street's last great gunslinger, Icahn had very little interest in running an airline, using it instead as a cash machine.

TWA was born Transcontinental and Western Air and was the property of Howard Hughes, the avia-

value of its name and saw the chance to slash costs by squeezing the unions. The irony is that unions embraced Icahn; he was considered preferable to Frank Lorenzo, the union-busting Texas Air chairman who also has his sights on TWA. Icahn won the airline and took it private in 1988. He all but cancelled the aircraft-replacement programme and sold its valuable London routes to American for \$445 million. Cash flow and profits soared, but the good times did not last long. Starved of investment and clobbered by the recession and the Gulf War, TWA filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in 1991. It emerged partly owned by its employees in 1993. Last year, it went back into bankruptcy again and, equipped with a debt-for-equity agreement with its creditors, came out in fighting spirit.

Although the worst was over for the airline, and its management was optimistic, TWA was still living on the edge. The crash of the 747 into the Atlantic can only increase the chances that it will become another chapter in aviation history.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Board and shareholders need to know about 'illegal calls' from inside BA

From Mr John Gorman, Sir, Your coverage of the British Airways AGM (July 16 and 17) seems to imply that my intention in attending the meeting was to be disruptive and mischievous. Far from it. As a long-standing shareholder, who has loyally attended every AGM since privatisation I am frankly embarrassed to have to bring to the attention of my fellow shareholders and the board the fact that serious criminal activities continue to be perpetrated against

me. Of course, my fellow shareholders recall with acute embarrassment the notorious British Airways dirty tricks campaign against Richard Branson and Virgin Atlantic, when large sums of our money had to be paid over in settlement, and British Airways had to make a public apology in the High Court for its disgraceful behaviour.

Whilst I agree that these matters must, and will, be aired in yet another civil prosecution against British

Airways, I quite rightly pointed out to Sir Colin Marshall and Robert Ayling that they are not above the law. The shareholders applauded in support of this statement. Sir Colin's rather limp response was that he could not control what calls were made from BA.

However, when I offered to play taped evidence, confirmed by British Telecom and the BBC, which proves that illegal threatening calls continue to be made from inside

BA's high security premises, the British Airways censors swung into action and my microphone was cut dead. Yours faithfully, JOHN GORMAN, Parque Residencia, Club Atlantis, Bungalow 210, San Eugenio, 38660, Playa de las Americas, Adeje, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain.

Thames Water's record on leaks

From Mr W. J. Alexander, Sir, Your report "Thames top of leak table" (July 8) was inaccurate.

The figures quoted were not "new" but were published by Ofwat in May this year, based on statistics provided by Thames Water for 1995-96. This period included the driest summer on record and a very cold winter, which inevitably increased leakage. Other water companies reported figures for 1994-95 and so their leakage rates did not take into account these extreme weather conditions.

Last year we also improved the way we calculated leakage losses, which was noted in Ofwat's report as partially accounting for increases in Thames Water's leakage rate. Thames Water is on target to meet its commitment to halve leakage by the year 2005.

Yours faithfully, W. J. ALEXANDER (Thames Water Group Managing Director), Thames Water Utilities, Nugent House, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire.

Unfair to Siemens

From the Chief Executive of Siemens plc, Sir, I should like to put the record straight on the claims and assumptions made in your Pennington column on July 16.

The figure of £200 million, which Siemens is reckoned to have received in "sweeteners" to build our new chip plant in North Tyneside, reflects the wild stab in the dark made by your newspaper last August at the level of government and other support we could expect during the lifetime of the project.

It appears that this figure has never been corrected in your archiving system, but I suggest it should be now to avoid further mistakes, as it is probably four times the potential level of support we could receive. I say potential because the total amount of support that we shall ultimately receive is entirely dependent on our meeting committed targets in terms of investment levels and jobs created.

As to our plans for the second module, we stated from the very outset that this module would always be dependent on market developments, and the same still applies.

Finally, in response to the implication that we only came to the UK for the money, but now want more, I should like, on the one hand, to restate that more money was on offer elsewhere, and, on the other, to remind you that Siemens already has 12 factories and some 12,000 employees in the UK, which, I think, is an indicator of our commitment to this country. Moreover, Siemens in the UK invested over £130 million of our own money in research and development last year, while Siemens overall spent over £1.1 billion of our own money purchasing goods and

services from British suppliers. To imply in your article that we have inflicted some sort of "hit-and-run mugging" on the British taxpayer, therefore, is deeply insulting both to our company and the Government, which has come so far in establishing the pro-business environment in the UK that has encouraged ours and so many other inward investments.

Surprise Me!

I am thinking of selling and would like a free auction valuation. I enclose photos/descriptions or please contact me to arrange an appointment. Please tell me about your other valuation services (probate, insurance, CGT, tax advice). I am interested in buying. Tell me about sales covering my interests, which are:

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Council liable for unnecessary health work

Welton v North Cornwall District Council

Before Lord Justice Rose, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Judge

[Judgment July 17]

Where an environmental health officer negligently required the owner of food premises to undertake works which were unnecessary to secure compliance with the Food Act 1990 and regulations made thereunder, and the owner incurred substantial and unnecessary expenditure in executing the works, the local food authority was under a common law duty of care to the owner and liable for damages for the economic loss sustained.

Having regard to the particular conduct complained of, the fact that the relationship between the parties arose out of the purported exercise of statutory functions afforded no reason why the local authority should not be liable in a case which otherwise fell within common law principles of duty of care.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by North Cornwall District Council against the award by Judge Anthony Thompson, QC, at Truro County Court on January 26, 1995, of damages of £39,522 to the plaintiffs, Victoria Florence Welton and David John Welton, for economic loss caused by the negligence of Brian Evans, an environmental health officer employed by the local authority.

Mr Roderick Denyer, QC and Mr Peter Wadley for the local authority; Mr Philip Mott, QC and Mr Christopher Kemp for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE ROSE said that the appeal raised interesting questions as to whether, and if so in what circumstances, a duty of care was owed by a local authority in respect of its environmental health officers when they were purporting to exercise statutory powers in relation to food hygiene.

Deportation court can see all evidence used even if it is hearsay

In re Saldar Rahman

Before Mr Justice Collins

[Judgment June 26]

When hearing an application for habeas corpus in a deportation case a court could see all the evidence that the Secretary of State for the Home Department had used as the basis of his decision to deport, even if it was hearsay, although it was for the court to decide what weight to accord to it.

Mr Justice Collins so held in the Queen's Bench Division refusing the application of Saldar Rahman for a writ of habeas corpus ad subjungendum in relation to his detention in deportation proceedings under the Immigration Act 1971.

The applicant, who had been born in Bangladesh, obtained a certificate of entitlement to join a man he claimed to be his father, Abdus Somed, in England and thereafter became a British citizen.

The secretary of state, acting on denunciations letters, obtained evidence from entry clearance officers who had interviewed villagers in Bangladesh through interpreters.

The evidence suggested that the applicant was not Abdus Somed's

son and that the applicant had obtained his certificate of residence in England by deception. He was served with a notice of illegal entry and detained under paragraph 16 of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971.

Mr Michael Shrimpton for the applicant; Mr Mark Shaw for the secretary of state.

MR JUSTICE COLLINS said that the evidence from the entry clearance officers was contained in affidavits and that evidence, Mr Shrimpton said, was hearsay, indeed, double hearsay, as it had been given through interpreters. It was not suggested that the entry clearance officers understood the dialects of the villagers who had been interviewed.

But there was great force in the submissions made by Mr Shaw that the court in that particular kind of case had a fact-finding role and was still reviewing the secretary of state's decision.

If the matter had been pursued by judicial review, then, prima facie, the court could take account of material properly forming the basis of the secretary of state's decision.

If Mr Shrimpton were correct then the court would be precluded

from relying on some of the material that the secretary of state had relied on. That suggested that material put before the court ought to include all the material that was before the secretary of state.

Mr Shrimpton was unhappy with that case which sought to amalgamate habeas corpus and judicial review. Certainly, historically and still today habeas corpus was a very useful weapon against any attempt to restrict the liberty of the individual in an unauthorized fashion.

It was wholly right and proper that the court should look at any material that was available to the secretary of state. It was for the court to decide what weight to attach to it.

His Lordship was satisfied that it was proven to the requisite standard that the applicant was not the son of Abdus Somed and did obtain the certificate by deception.

Solicitors: Saf Awan, Luton; Treasury Solicitor.

In any event, in relation both to the police and the CPS there was an exception to the principle that no duty was owed where, in relation to the particular plaintiff, responsibility had been assumed.

On a proper analysis of the authorities, the duty in *Hedley Byrne and Henderson v Mervin Syndicates Ltd* [(1995) 2 AC 413], the judge's conclusion that the relationship gave rise to a duty of

care within the ambit of the *Hedley Byrne* principle was unsustainable.

His unchallenged findings of fact included reliance by the plaintiffs on the officer and knowledge of such reliance on the officer's part.

Accordingly, there was within *Hedley Byrne*, as subsequently analysed, an assumption of responsibility by the officer and hence a duty of care owed by him.

A final question arose as to whether the existence of a statutory duty provided any ground for excluding from the ambit of a *Hedley Byrne* duty a relationship derived from the exercise of statutory powers and duties.

When considering the impact of statutory duty on the relationship in the present case there were at least three categories of conduct to which the existence of the local authority's statutory enforcement duties might have given rise.

First, there might be conduct specifically directed to statutory enforcement, such as the institution of proceedings, the service of improvement notices and the obtaining of a statutory function.

Such conduct, even if careless, would only give rise to common law liability if the circumstances were such as to raise a duty of care at common law and such a duty was not raised if it was inconsistent with the statutory duties.

Second, there was the offering of an advisory service: in so far as that was merely part and parcel of the local authority's system for discharging its statutory duties, liability would be excluded so as not to impede the due performance of those duties.

But in so far as it went beyond that, the advisory service was capable of giving rise to a duty of care and the fact that the service was offered by a local authority was not a bar to liability.

Third, there was conduct such as that in the present case, namely the imposition by the officer, without the legislation, of detailed requirements

enforced by threat of closure and close supervision.

The existence of the local authority's statutory powers and duties afforded no reason why they should not be liable at common law for the third type of conduct by their servant, which was otherwise well within the *Hedley Byrne* principle.

If it was material to consider policy and what was fair, just and reasonable, which his Lordship doubted, those considerations could not lead to any conclusion other than that conduct in the third category gave rise to a duty at common law.

LORD JUSTICE WARD, concurring in the result, said that while, in a case falling within the *Hedley Byrne* principle, there was no need to embark on any further inquiry whether it was fair, just and reasonable to impose liability for economic loss, the fact remained that the officer was purporting to carry out the local authority's statutory function. It was inevitable, therefore, that questions of policy, and fairness, justice and reasonableness did arise in that connection.

The officer in the present case was acting both outside the powers of the Act and also outside the informal enforcement practice of the local authority.

In the scale and detail of the directions he gave and the degree of control he exercised, he conducted himself in a manner which was exceptional. Those circumstances made the case special to its own facts.

Fairness, reasonableness and justice and all the material aspects of policy inextricably wrapped in those concepts led his Lordship to uphold the duty of care imposed upon the local authority in the particular case.

Lord Justice Judge delivered a judgment concurring with Lord Justice Rose.

Solicitors: Blake Lopham for Stephens & Scown, Truro; Frank & Cuffin, Truro.

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board did not act unlawfully in refusing an oral hearing to an applicant who was refused compensation because of his criminal convictions.

In *Regina v Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Ex parte Dickson*

Before Lord Justice Rose, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Judge

[Judgment July 11]

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board did not act unlawfully in refusing an oral hearing to an applicant who was refused compensation because of his criminal convictions.

In *Regina v Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Ex parte Dickson*, the applicant sought and was refused compensation because of his criminal convictions.

The court considered whether the board's decision to refuse compensation was lawful.

The court found that the board's decision was lawful.

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Jury entitled to convict on encouragement to kill

Regina v Giamarchi

Before Lord Justice Kennedy, Mr Justice Laws and Mr Justice Maurice Kay

[Judgment June 28]

A jury was entitled to convict a defendant of murder if all the jurors were satisfied that if he was not the killer he at least encouraged the killing.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held in a reserved judgment dismissing the appeal of Robert Vassallo Giamarchi against his conviction on October 30, 1995 in Bristol Crown Court (Mr Justice Rousley and a jury of murder).

Mr J. C. T. Barton, QC, who did not appear below and Mr Ian Bullock, advised by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the appellant; Mr Paul Chadd, QC and Mr Martin Meade for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE KENNEDY, giving the judgment of the court, said that it was the prosecution case that the defendant had either murdered his wife himself or got someone else to do it.

It was submitted on appeal that the jury judge was in error when he failed to direct the jury that they must be unanimous as to which of the two competing versions of events put forward by the Crown they accepted.

The proposition that a jury must all find each essential element in an offence to be proved was not

contentious: see *R v Brown* (Kevin) (1993) 79 Cr App R 115.

But in the context of the present case the decision in *Brown* seemed merely to raise the question as to what really were the essential elements of the offence which had to be proved, bearing in mind that the law had never required individual jurors to agree about everything.

In the present case the starting point was section 8 of the Accessories and Abettors Act 1861, as amended, section 65(4) of the Criminal Law Act 1977, the effect of which was that even if the appellant did no more than encourage someone else to kill his wife he was liable to be tried, indicted and punished as a principal offender and where, as here, the prosecution for good reason was unable to say whether the defendant did more than encourage, it must be open to them to invite the jury as a whole to find that at least he encouraged.

The jury might convict with some jurors satisfied that the defendant was actually the killer, but all jurors satisfied that he was at least the defendant encouraged.

The authorities had been considered with some care: see, inter alia, *R v Phillips* (Daniel) (1987) 86 Cr App R 181, *Thatcher v The Queen* (1987) 39 DLR (4th) 275 and *R v Gough* (1992) 15 Cr App R 157.

Their Lordships were satisfied that in the circumstances the judge had not erred in his direction.

There were two cardinal principles: (i) the jury must be agreed upon the basis on which they found a defendant guilty; (ii) a defendant must know what case he had to meet.

Where the Crown alleged that on the evidence the defendant must have committed the offence either as principal or as accessory, then they could not say which, the fact that the jury had to be unanimous was that the defendant, having the necessary mens rea, by whatever means caused the result which was criminalised by the law.

The Crown was not required to specify the means, because the legal definition of the crime did not require it, and the defendant knew perfectly well what case he had to meet.

Of course if, as would often be the case, the Crown relied on evidence to a particular fact, that fact would, generally, have to be established in the terms in which it was put.

This judgment should give no encouragement to prosecutors casting round for alternative possibilities where the essential evidence did not show a clear case against a defendant.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Bristol.

Criminal injuries applicant not entitled to oral hearing

Regina v Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Ex parte Dickson

Before Lord Justice Rose, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Judge

[Judgment July 11]

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board did not act unlawfully in refusing an oral hearing to an applicant who was refused compensation because of his criminal convictions.

In *Regina v Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Ex parte Dickson*, the applicant sought and was refused compensation because of his criminal convictions.

The court considered whether the board's decision to refuse compensation was lawful.

The court found that the board's decision was lawful.

The court dismissed the appeal.

The court found that the board's decision was lawful.

The court dismissed the appeal.

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THEATRE 1

The art of the vast spectacle: it's all a matter of military precision... and prayer



THEATRE 2

Hey, let's do a Jane Austen right here! The King's Head gives *Emma* the informal treatment

THE TIMES ARTS



MUSIC

Alban Berg's songs are performed by Glyndebourne's new Lulu, Christine Schäfer

TOMORROW

How will London's new nude musical, *Voyeurz*, compare with the fleshy wonders of *Oh! Calcutta?*

RECITAL

The last word

International Songmakers Wigmore Hall

THE theme of the first and last songs of composers from Beethoven to Berg inspired Graham Johnson as deviser, commentator and pianist to eloquence worthy of Jaques in his Seven Ages of Man, when International Songmakers returned to the Wigmore Hall on Wednesday.

The German soprano and mezzo, Christine Schäfer, and the young Icelandic baritone Finnur Bjarnason, helped Johnson relate an affectionate pilgrim's progress. He mined no words about Beethoven's first song, *Der Kuss*, accusing the composer of boorishness in the coarse little ditty boldly sung by Bjarnason. And then came the last, visionary song, the *Abendlied unter gestirnten Himmel*, with Schäfer's soprano and Johnson's piano-playing recreating Beethoven's own starry night.

On Schubert's first (*Der Jungling am Bache*) and Mendelssohn's first and last (*Der Verlassene* (Abandoned), written when he was 12, and the *Alteutsches Frühlingslied* only days before his death).

On through Brahms and Wolf to Debussy, whose first song was a waltz for a coloratura mistress, ably reincarnated in Schäfer, and to Reynaldo Hahn, who at 13 composed *Si mes vœux étaient des ailes* and probably never wrote a better song: Douteux was velvet to Schäfer's wild silk.

Fauré's *Je me suis enbauché* showed Bjarnason well at ease in the French idiom, while his performance of Shostakovich's final *Immortalité*, found the weight to balance the starry piano-writing of a tune the composer wrote when he was nine.

After the interval Schäfer, Glyndebourne's own Lulu, focused the early songs of Alban Berg, Johnson's readings from Berg's love letters to his wife, apostrophising her art and her voice, would have been enough to make any soprano feel inadequate. But Schäfer was more than equal to her task, and Douteux and Bjarnason enjoyed their own darker songs, *Winter*, *Regen* and the final *Grabschrift*.

HILARY FINCH

As the Olympics open, Andy Lavender learns how to throw a world-class party

The big bang theorists

IF, late tonight, you tune in to the opening ceremony of the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, you will watch one of the biggest live shows ever staged. The creative types at Don Mischer Productions, who are organising the whole jamboree, are jealously guarding their secrets, but you can expect massed choirs, drumming from 100 percussionists and Jessye Norman singing *Altijs, Citius, Fortius* ("Higher, Faster, Stronger" for those who have forgotten their Latin).

But these are said to be mere fragments of a mega-show, the staging of which involves more than 9,000 people. World records will be broken even before the sporting business begins.

It is not only in America that size is every thing. England, too, has its exponents of the huge extravaganza, and they work in different dimensions to you and me. When they say "fireworks in the garden", they mean hundreds of pyrotechnics choreographed to music at Buckingham Palace.

When they casually mention a "flying visit", they are generally referring to an aerobic exhibition by the Red Arrows. Given the precision with which such spectacles must be organised, it seems appropriate that one of Britain's leading producers in this field should be a former Army officer. Major Michael Parker keeps in touch with his first career by producing the Royal Tournament, but that must be a breeze compared with last year's *magnum opus*: the VE-Day celebrations at Hyde Park and Buckingham Palace.

Consider that Parker had at his disposal more than 40 acres of parkland; that the participants over the three days included tri-service massed bands, free-fall parachutists, a barbershop chorus of 100, a male voice choir of 3,000 and a typhoon of vintage aircraft with, as a final trifle, a huge firework and laser display. To complicate matters, there were 57 heads of state to consider.

"Somehow I find it easier to do things on a grand scale," Parker says. "Ask me to organise a parish fête and I'd be absolutely useless. Ask me to

organise the largest children's party in the world, with 180,000 underprivileged children, a million portions of food and the longest sausage on Earth and I'm really quite good." That was in 1985, and must have been quite a bash.

Apart from emphasising the virtues of meticulous planning and close teamwork, Parker stresses the more creative side to his work, even in traditional areas such as the ubiquitous firework display. "We always try to co-ordinate the fireworks exactly and to have many different moods, not just 'bang, bang, bang' all the time," he says. "It worked particularly well when we did a very unusual display for the G7 Summit [in 1991] in the quadrangle of Buckingham Palace, with fireworks coming off the roofs and the balconies."

The major is a regular purveyor of royal good times. It was he, for instance, who organised the fireworks in 1981 on the eve of the wedding between Charles and Diana, and his next regal assignment is the Queen's golden wedding anniversary next year, a modest affair at Ascot involving more than 1,000 horses. It is difficult to know whether this will prove less taxing than the celebration he staged for King Hussein of Jordan, featuring 100 camels.

Let us turn, however, to more demotic entertainments. The most recent of these, of course, accompanied Euro '96. The opening and closing ceremonies at Wembley Stadium were the responsibility of Tony Ball, who is chairman of his own marketing and production agency, Tony Ball Associates, and one of a small band of blue-chip showmen.

"I describe our business as 'industrial theatre'," Ball says. "It isn't theatre for entertainment's sake, pure and simple, but the projection of a message, product or event which has a commercial purpose and perhaps an international importance."

"With Euro '96 we were playing to an audience of more than 400 million people. If it goes wrong, it goes wrong in a big way. It's very scary, but very exciting."

Ball and his colleagues devised an opening ceremony with a narrative of sorts, moving from a medieval setting in which St George slew the Dragon, to a history of the development of football, to a high-tech finale. Parachutists landed on the Wembley turf bearing the flags of the participating nations. Mick Hucknall sang the Euro '96 anthem (or dirge, depending on your view), *We're In This Together*, and the Red Arrows flew above the stadium releasing red, white and blue smoke.



Lighting the sky: fireworks must be more than "just 'bang, bang, bang' all the time"

You might think that this is roast beef and dumplings compared with, say, the opening and closing ceremonies at the Barcelona Olympics, fondly remembered for their imaginative panache. Nevertheless, you cannot deny that the logistics of such an operation are daunting.

"We had to liaise with the civil aviation authorities, Brent Council, the police, the broadcasters and Wembley Stadium," Ball says, "and co-ordinate everything in a time schedule which would run to the second. And we had contingencies ready in case, say, the cloud level wouldn't allow the parachutists to come in, or if it rained and the orchestra

couldn't appear, or if there had been a crowd problem outside the ground."

The next huge celebration comes in the shape of the millennium festivities in three years' time, which are being organised by the design consultancy Imagination. "We believe the most important thing is never to forget the Big Idea," says Ralph Ardill, the company's marketing director. In this instance the notion of time provides the central theme, and is accompanied by a Big Strategy.

"We want to create a programme of regional activities," Ardill explains, "culminating with the millennium celebrations on the

Greenwich peninsula, that give the country an opportunity to participate rather than merely spectate."

It remains to be seen how this will be achieved, but those who enjoy painting on the largest possible canvas are already preparing their brushes. Do such massive public entertainments constitute an art, however, or are they merely an exercise in military-style organisation?

"The great rule is: if it's easy to do, it's not worth doing," Parker says. "Unless it's vast, it's not going to capture people's imaginations. And if you're 100 per cent certain it's going to work, you must be doing the wrong thing."

LONDON THEATRE

Haven't we seen this one before?

Emma King's Head

JANE AUSTEN Industries pic cranks on, and on and on, turning out products that merge in my mind into *Northanger Sensibility*, or *Prejudice Abbey*, or *Pride and Persuasion Park*. At least Michael Fry's production of his own adaptation of *Emma* has an amiable, informal feel, in keeping with the atmosphere of the King's Head.

The prevailing style is signalled right away. Three Regency belles, decked out in Jennifer Ehle designer dresses, dance onstage and proclaim their wish to put on a play. But what shall it be? *The Rivals*, or Austen's own *Sir Charles Grandison*? No, they just happen to have three copies of *Emma* and, before you can say Colin Firth, they have not only started narrating the book's opening lines but have been joined by two Regency bucks who already know everything thought or said by Messrs Knightley, Elton, Weston et al.

In the programme Fry describes this as "a distancing device", though I cannot see why he needs one. It comes across more as an excuse for an ad-hoc set and a lot of jokey doubling, trebling and, in one case, quadrupling. Fortunately, this last case happens to be Katherine Fry, who has undeniable comic gifts. One minute she is Emma Woodhouse's friend Harriet Smith, naively boggling from beneath a wig sired by a rooster on a haystack, and the next she is the awful arriviste Mrs Elton, donating words like "be-rouché landau" and "Maple

Grove" to the conversation in the manner of Lady Bountiful endowing an almshouse.

Either you know the story already, or I will risk spoiling your enjoyment of the five movies, three mini-series, two operas, and one baller-on-ice about to be based on Austen's original. Enough to say that Clara Salaman makes a pleasant heroine; Jonathan Chesser's Elton comes across as a dim, bouncing cleric escaped from the musical *By Jeeves*; and Antony Edridge has the emotional and physical weight for Mr Moral Reproach, aka Knightley.

Five performers are not quite enough: which is why cloth-faced dolls occasionally appear and why Mr Woodhouse is played sometimes by Sally Mortimore in a blanket and sometimes by a large broom. Either way, one of Austen's most entertaining characters goes missing, as does his most celebrated line, "an egg boiled very soft is not unwholesome". Or did I fail to hear this in the narrative fizz of a production so quick-fire that the already mysterious Jane Fairfax is inscrutably said, not to be parentless, but to "have been unfortunate enough to lose both her parents"? Lucky. Isn't it, that Jane Austen heroines always carry a third part in reserve.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Situations vacant

Channel Four Sitcom Festival Riverside Studios

THE Channel Four Sitcom Festival continues with another trio of half-hour pilot shows, potential television series being tested on live audiences. Sporadically tickling but hardly side-splitting, this week's threesome sees the funny side of cut-throat family businesses and farcically inefficient offices.

Last Legs, by Paul Shearer and Lenny Barker, is a kind of spoof *Dallas* set up North. Jack Pike (William Gaunt) is a Yorkshire tycoon. Chewing on his cigar and belching, he is ruthlessly diddling his pristinely pin-striped heirs. Meanwhile, his eldest son (Robert Bathurst) is secretly masterminding a takeover bid.

There are flashes of hilarity, but the script seems strangled for jokes, and William Burdett-Coutts's cast are not fully galvanised.

The Magnificent Andersons, by David Upsher and Diana Fox, has more potential, picking up on a married couple who hope to make it as a double-act on the comedy circuit but are biting each other's heads off at home.

Andy Riley and Kevin Cecil hit on a satirically promising

scenario in *Bleeding Hearts*, set in the communal offices of a charity organisation inappropriately called Action Now. Eluned Hawkins's hopelessly democratic manager offers to phone the trustees to complain about herself whenever she almost takes a decision.

Meanwhile, Sarah the teenage volunteer throws militant tantrums. Bathurst, as Alan the lecherous aid worker, drapes himself hopefully across the women's desks. But the storyline feels incoherent, and the acting is up and down.

Really, the fun of this festival, when the scripts aren't quite up to scratch, is seeing an ensemble of established actors tackling the whole season, and being prepared to stand up in front of an audience when still feeling their way into sketchily-written characters.

KATE BASSETT

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NATIONAL GALLERY

THEATRE IN IRELAND

New tack for old salt

GALWAY'S Macnas troupe originally developed its unique, loud and physical performance style for outdoor shows and parades. In recent years, however, the company has attempted to move indoors, finding a way to blend spectacular stunts and costumes with more complex theatrical storytelling.

The latest stage in this journey undercover is *Rhymes from the Ancient Mariner*, the inaugural production in Galway's brand new performance space. The venue should suit Macnas' style well. There is no stage in the hangar-like building — just plenty of space, enough for an indoor parade, complete with two bands and a tiny armada of floats.

Even with Coleridge as scriptwriter of the proto-environmentalist text, *Rhymes* opts against relying too heavily on the spoken word, instead investing most of its energy in these immense set pieces, tightly choreographed movement and live music.

Rod Goodall, the director, translates the original poem's framing device, a wedding, to a rowdy nuptial celebration in the west of Ireland, complete with a despotic father-of-the-bride and a beer-bellied skiffle quartet, churning out walk-

Rhymes from the Ancient Mariner Black Box, Galway

time Lennie Donegan covers. Macnas use the chaotic wedding scenario as a launchpad for some dynamic interaction with the audience. Not until the bride and groom and their guests have arrived, bumping and dancing their way through the audience, does the Ancient Mariner show up, dropped from high above in a diving helmet, getting in the centre of the wedding cake.

As he begins to unburden himself to the father-of-the-bride, a curtain opens to reveal the full extent of the theatre and the set. The audience promenades through islands and iceflows, catches sight of a pool of writhing, luminous slime and an orchestra perched on top of a mountain, moves along a thronged quayside and scrambles to avoid the advancing bows of a sailing ship.

Soon the Mariner and his crew are sailing the Southern seas of the auditorium, getting caught in living ice — great transparent shards filled with

howling actors — and eventually sitting the cursed albatross (trapeze artist Zoe Maistre, dancing high above the crowd in a white jumpsuit).

With activity on this grand scale, performances and vocal performances in particular, have apparently suffered a lack of attention. The cast interact boisterously with the audience on an individual level, but when isolated on the show's various moving stages they instantly become stiffer and less engaging.

Most of the drama is conducted in a broad, pantomime style. Nevertheless, more inspiring verse recitations would certainly have added force to the production. As it was, the lines hissed by the Mariner (Midge Corcoran), were far too flimsy. At this wedding feast, the trimmings are undeniably more enjoyable than the main dish.

It is only when the Mariner has finally completed his rime, and the wedding band has reappeared, that the production picks up speed again. Precious energy returns, but only as the happy couple run from the building, where a waiting Morris Minor speeds them into the Corrib sunset.

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CHOICE 1

Andrew Davis conducts Haydn's Creation to open the Proms

VENUE: Tonight at the Albert Hall, and on BBC2



CHOICE 2

Lesley Garrett brings a touch of glamour to the arias in Chester

VENUE: Tonight in Grosvenor Park

THE TIMES ARTS

POP

A small change of direction for the Black Crowes on their new *Three Snakes and One Charm*



POP 2

Music or mush? As Toni Braxton soars to dizzy heights of fame, her material gets worse

David Sinclair hears the Black Crowes lighten up and fly straight at the charts

Reasons to be cheerful (partly)

MUNDY
To You I Bestow
(Epic 099766 346229)
MUNDY, a 21-year-old singer and songwriter from Burr, County Offaly, is the latest in a steady stream of Irish musical exports, and his new single is a heartfelt folk-rock song performed with that stirring sense of mission so typical of that country's performers.

"My love for you is better than diamonds/To you everything I bestow," he promises in a brogue that recalls the troubadour style of Mike Scott, while the band conjures up a suitably windswept backdrop with shimmering electric and acoustic guitars and a distant harmonica riding a firm up-tempo beat. A thunderous roll of tomtoms brings the song to a mighty climax.

BLACK CROWES
Three Snakes and One Charm
(American/BMG 74321 38484)
BUFFETED by internal strife and no doubt chastened by the comparatively modest sales of their previous offering, *America*, the Black Crowes have rung a few changes on *Three Snakes and One Charm*, their fourth album.

For whereas *America* was a gloriously uncompromising celebration of the big riff, harnessed to a variety of bone-deep funk-rock grooves, *Three Snakes* is a much more considered affair. There are still plenty of bumpy, stop-start chord sequences, and singer Chris Robinson continues to croak, yell and splutter his way through numbers such as the Sly Stone-influenced *(Only) Halfway To Everywhere* like a dog baying at the moon. But there is a lighter touch as well, such as on the reflective *Bring On, Bring On* and the acoustic *Better When You're Not Alone*, the latter being barely recognisable as a Black Crowes song. And even on the rosy strut of *Under a Mountain* or the chunky prog-rock riffing of *Neboconzer*, the tunes and choruses have been granted a new priority status.

Basically, this is the Black Crowes' pop album. But, although a broadly enjoyable collection, in striving a little too self-consciously for mainstream appeal it lacks the driven quality of its predecessors.

NICOLETTE
Let No One Live Rent Free In Your Head
(Talkin' Loud/Mercury 532 634)
BEST known for her association with Massive Attack, with whom she has recorded and toured, Nicolette picks up the threads of a fitful solo career with *Let No One Live Rent Free In Your Head*.

In keeping with its title, the album has a studied air of post-trip hop weirdness about it. Strange electronic sound effects vie with smatterings of brass on *We Never Know*, while a skittish jungle drum rhythm pushes the rubbery jazz melody of *Song for Europe* along in a breathless, minimalist rush.

By the time it gets to *Nightmare*, in which Nicolette's sighing, kitchenish whisper is enveloped by a swirling mass of noise that sounds as if it were concocted in a cement mixer, the novelty is wearing as thin as the musical content.

There has been a lot of this stuff flying around in the wake of Portishead's groundbreaking album, *Dummy*, with artists from Moloko and Morcheeba to Ingrid Schabert all trying to outdo each other in the mysterious, otherworldly stakes. But this is too contrived to stand out from the crowd.

TONI BRAXTON
Secrets
(LaFace/Arista 73008-26020)
HAVING sold ten million copies of her debut album,



Cheer up, dear old Black Crowes, there are much worse things to be than successful

Toni Braxton is approaching the dizzy heights of success, inhabited by that select breed of pop divas on first-name terms with the world.

Like Whitney and Mariah, Toni has a tremendous singing technique, her vocal signature being a lovely, rounded tone that often drops to a deep, sensual growl. But there seems to be something about artists who breathe the thin oxygen at that rarefied level that turns their music to mush.

Produced and written in large part by Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, with contributions from Tony Rich

and R. Kelly among others, *Secrets* is a collection of modern soul and swingbeat love songs arranged in various shades of slow. Some, such as her current hit, *You're Makin' Me High*, are mildly seductive, and there is a dark twist to *Talking in His Sleep* that elevates it above the stylised sweet-talk that is otherwise the norm.

But the album suffers from a preponderance of slushy ballads such as *There's No Me Without You* and *Find Me A Man* with such abjectly submissive lyrics that you feel her next step should be to sign up for a course in self-assertion.

PAUL BLACK AND THE FLIP KINGS
King Dollar
(House Of Blues 0010-87009)

A BOTTLENECK guitarist and blues shouter from Baraboo, Wisconsin, Paul Black has worked with masters of the art from Mike Bloomfield to Sonny Landreth. *King Dollar*, his debut album with the Flip Kings, reflects an abiding fondness for the songs of Robert Johnson, with re-tooled versions of *Malted Milk*, *Honeycomb Blues* and *Dead Shrimp Blues* alongside Black's own songs in a swampy, Southern bar-band vein.

Black's guitar playing is a joy, his tone rough and raucous yet gleaming like cut glass, and the harmonica playing of Andy Linderman is no less impressive. But like so many practitioners of this venerable music, they lack an original angle, and the inclusion of two Rolling Stones songs, *The Last Time* and *Factory Girl*, rather detracts from the authenticity of the set.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1. Jagged Little Pill.....Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
2. Moseley Shoals.....Ocean Colour Scene (MCA)
3. The Very Best Of.....Crowded House (Capitol)
4. The Smurfs Go Pop!.....Smurfs (EMI TV)
5. Falling Into You.....Celine Dion (Epic)
6. The Score.....Fugees (Columbia)
7. (What's the Story) Morning Glory?.....Oasis (Creation)
8. Older.....George Michael (Virgin)
9. 1977.....Ash (Infectious)
10. Ocean Drive.....Lighthouse Family (Wild Card)

LONDON

BBC PROMS 96. The annual Henry Wood Promenade Concerts are upon us once again, and the 102nd season opens with Haydn's *Creation* (tonight, 7.30pm). Andrew Davis conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, with Julian Bann, soprano, Hans Peter Schötz, tenor, and Wolfgang Schöne, bass. On Saturday (8pm), Bernard Haitink conducts the Royal Opera House Orchestra and Chorus in an Italian version of Verdi's *Don Carlos*. Sylvie Valmary, Olga Solomonova and Dmitri Hvorostovsky are among the soloists. Well's jazz-influenced *The Silver Lake* (Sunday, 7.30pm) brings the first of the London Sinfonietta under Niklaus Sarg. Sung in German, Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-895 8212) Tonight-Sun.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Sir Edward Heath celebrates his 80th birthday by conducting the English Chamber Orchestra in Weber's *Obéron* overture. Debut's evocative *Summer Night* on the River. Mozart's Piano Concerto No 17 and Schubert's magical Fifth Symphony. The evening ends with Handel's *Water Music* and a spectacular fireworks display. Riverside Lakeside, Harpenden Lane, MK16 (0171-413 1433) Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

THE RED BALLOON. Anthony Clark's endearing stage version of the classic

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Mearns

1860s French film. Already seen in Manchester, Bristol and Birmingham, it now comes floating into London. Run Munchison creates a lovely set. *Madame Tante* (Sat, 7.30pm). South Bank, SE1 (0171-838 2262). Preview begins tomorrow, 3pm and 7pm. Then in rep.

ELSEWHERE
BURTON: A limited number of tickets remain for a co-production by Opera House and the Lyric Theatre, Belfast, of John Gay's satirical *The Beggar's Opera* (tonight, 7.30pm; Sunday, 2.30pm). On Saturday (7.30pm), the Opera Theatre Company, Dublin, stage Amadeus, Handel's magic opera in three acts. Opera House, Water Street (01206 72100). Tonight-Sunday.

CHESTER: The evening's concert (Grandstand Park, 8pm) by the "soprano in red", Lesley Garrett, is a sell-out, but there may be slim chance of returns. Tickets are selling fast, too, for the BBC Philharmonic concert on Saturday (Chester Cathedral, 8pm). The conductor Van Pascal Tonder leads the orchestra in Mendelssohn's *Pia* Concerto No 2 (piano Leon McCawley).

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

Hearts full, returns only. Some new arrivals. Seats at all prices.

Barbican, 5th Street, EC2 (0171-438 8811). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.15pm; mat Sat, 2pm. In rep. **6**

MARTIN GARDNER: The latest British and American musical, set to follow the success of *Les Mis* and *Miss Saigon*. Directed by John Caird. Theatres: Theatres of Wales, Coventry Street W1 (0171-539 5875). Mon-Thurs 8pm; Fri and Sat, 5.30 and 8.30pm.

THE MEMORY OF WATER: Terry Johnson directs a play by new author Stephen Stephenson set among the squabbling that follow a mother's funeral, though she still appears in the play. The play includes Mary Jo Rendell and Haydn Gwynne. Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (0171-722 9301). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 4pm.

NORTHANGER ABBEY: Susan Jane Horn plays Jane Austen's young life of the Gothic shock-horror. Concorde, Mulberry Fields, Chelsea. A new production. Directors: John Newland and Julian Glover (Bristol and Newcastle). Opening at his home in New Hall's production from last year's Stratford season.

JOHN'S MAMBO: Both Wood's Theatre Studio production, here as part of the Merton Arts Festival. Imaginary account of Jean Genet being two actresses to play the desperate, half-remembered events in *The Maids*. Information Centre, 103 Broadway, SW10 (0181-542 6141). Mon-Sat, 8pm. Until July 27.

JOHN'S MAMBO: Christopher Benjamin plays the colorful, John Newland and Julian Glover (Bristol and Newcastle). Opening at his home in New Hall's production from last year's Stratford season.

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THE ODD COUPLE: Jack Klugman, Tony Randall play the two divorced husbands, who and Klugman, in a revival of Neil Simon's comedy. South Bank, SE1 (0171-838 8803). Mon-Fri, 8pm; Sat, 8.15pm; mat Thurs, 3pm and Sat, 2pm.

RAIN SHAKERS: Fanning new, set in Hans Christian Andersen's Copenhagen, exploring the emotional costs of ambition. Strong performances by Stan Thomas, Jason Morda, Robert David Macdonald. Last week. Young Vic, 6th St, SE1 (0171-898 9883). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.45pm.

ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES: British Lullaby George Collier and Paul J. Medford in an enjoyable song-through musical from the songs of Robert Schumann. Theatres: Theatres of Wales, Coventry Street W1 (0171-539 5875). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat Thurs and Sat, 3pm.

LONG RUNNERS
6 Cedar New London (0171-405 0072)
7 Communicating Dancers: Savoy (0171-416 6000)
8 Jolson: Victoria Palace (0171-834 1317)
9 The Muppet Show: The Muppet Theatre (0171-834 1443)
10 The Phantom of the Opera: Her Majesty's (0171-484 5400)
11 The Women in Black: Fortune (0171-408 2288)
12 Starlight Express: Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6004)
13 The Women in Black: Fortune (0171-408 2288)
14 The Women in Black: Fortune (0171-408 2288)
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THE ROCK (18): Believable action movie set at Alcatraz, with Nicolas Cage, Sean Connery and Ed Harris. Directors: Michael Bay. Theatres: Theatres of Wales, Coventry Street W1 (0171-539 5875). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat Thurs and Sat, 3pm.

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ENTERTAINMENTS

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FRANCIS BACON
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The Royal Ballet
Ton 7.30 Sat 10.30
Tues 2.30 Sat 7.30 (First performance)
SWAN LAKE
Thurs 7.30 (First Night)
Admission 10.00/12.50/15.00/20.00/25.00/30.00/35.00/40.00/45.00/50.00/55.00/60.00/65.00/70.00/75.00/80.00/85.00/90.00/95.00/100.00/105.00/110.00/115.00/120.00/125.00/130.00/135.00/140.00/145.00/150.00/155.00/160.00/165.00/170.00/175.00/180.00/185.00/190.00/195.00/200.00/205.00/210.00/215.00/220.00/225.00/230.00/235.00/240.00/245.00/250.00/255.00/260.00/265.00/270.00/275.00/280.00/285.00/290.00/295.00/300.00/305.00/310.00/315.00/320.00/325.00/330.00/335.00/340.00/345.00/350.00/355.00/360.00/365.00/370.00/375.00/380.00/385.00/390.00/395.00/400.00/405.00/410.00/415.00/420.00/425.00/430.00/435.00/440.00/445.00/450.00/455.00/460.00/465.00/470.00/475.00/480.00/485.00/490.00/495.00/500.00/505.00/510.00/515.00/520.00/525.00/530.00/535.00/540.00/545.00/550.00/555.00/560.00/565.00/570.00/575.00/580.00/585.00/590.00/595.00/600.00/605.00/610.00/615.00/620.00/625.00/630.00/635.00/640.00/645.00/650.00/655.00/660.00/665.00/670.00/675.00/680.00/685.00/690.00/695.00/700.00/705.00/710.00/715.00/720.00/725.00/730.00/735.00/740.00/745.00/750.00/755.00/760.00/765.00/770.00/775.00/780.00/785.00/790.00/795.00/800.00/805.00/810.00/815.00/820.00/825.00/830.00/835.00/840.00/845.00/850.00/855.00/860.00/865.00/870.00/875.00/880.00/885.00/890.00/895.00/900.00/905.00/910.00/915.00/920.00/925.00/930.00/935.00/940.00/945.00/950.00/955.00/960.00/965.00/970.00/975.00/980.00/985.00/990.00/995.00/1000.00/1005.00/1010.00/1015.00/1020.00/1025.00/1030.00/1035.00/1040.00/1045.00/1050.00/1055.00/1060.00/1065.00/1070.00/1075.00/1080.00/1085.00/1090.00/1095.00/1100.00/1105.00/1110.00/1115.00/1120.00/1125.00/1130.00/1135.00/1140.00/1145.0

POP 3

Eclectic and a touch eccentric: Afro Celt Sound System sum up the spirit of a Womad festival



POP 4

Even the gangly Jarvis Cocker was all but invisible at the appalling T-in-the-Park

THE TIMES ARTS

BLUES

Sonny Rhodes, with steel guitar on lap and turban on head, is showcased on a new CD

JAZZ

Complex, subtle and many-layered: Maria Schneider's arrangements are collected on a new recording

Cattle are better treated

If Glastonbury is the peach of pop festivals, last weekend's T-in-the-Park must be the pits

There is a general mis-information deal going on with festivals. Promoted as a thrilling rock'n'roll rollercoaster ride full of camaraderie, good vibes, exotic cuisine and bands all playing as if it's the last night at Woodstock, they turn out to be fields full of drunken future convicts spoiling for a fight: gut-rut in a bun, and bands like Kula Shaker playing their one hit and unreasonably expecting applause for doing so.

Within three hours of arriving at the festival, disappointment begins to set in. Your life hasn't changed and there isn't a decent band on until tomorrow. The mark of a good festival is whether things improve after this point. Glastonbury, the most perfectly formed festival on this earth, provides ample opportunities for escaping festival depression: fields full of naked pagans standing on their heads; people dressed as sausages trying to interest you in the worshipping of the sun god Ra; lots of relaxed people with purple hair who are more than happy to direct you to the nearest sacred toilet. The organisation is well-oiled and all encompassing without ever being obtrusive, and one gets the general feeling that one is a treasured guest of Michael Eavis, the organiser. This feeling is compounded by hearing stories of people who have indulged in dangerous mind-bending drugs and remain, hidden in trees, after the festival has ended. Eavis coaxes them down and keeps them as guests at his farmhouse for a few days, before finding out their addresses and driving them home.

I can't imagine the same thing happening with the organisers of last weekend's T-in-the-Park festival in Scotland. I rather suspect that if one was a personal house guest of the organisers of T-in-the-Park, one would be charged a supplement every time they made you a cup of tea. I imagine this being the case if you were their child and it was your birthday. T-in-the-Park is a two-day investment opportunity held in the open air in Hamilton, near Glasgow, at which bands happen to play. I have never before

attended a concert with audiences in excess of 60,000 where no large video screens were provided. With crowds of that size, the majority of the audience is about 200 yards away from the stage. When you have spent three weeks' wages on attending the whole event, you expect to see some small part of what's going on. Even with Jarvis Cocker, who is around eight feet tall, it was like watching a singing Crimpenne flea circus through the wrong end of a telescope.

Secondly, it was a little disturbing to see children of eight and nine with sponsors' T-shirts painted on their faces by resident face-painters. It became tasteless when one spent any time at all outside the festival area. Here were about 2,000 ticketless punters drinking Buckfast tonic wine; some trying to snatch those who had them; groping female security staff, and instigating constant little spat with riot-shielded police. Watching endless streams of unconscious drunks being stretched to ambulances, beneath billowing, 50ft Tennants "T" flags, was one of those jokes without any humour.

The scariest thing of all, though, in a fraught two days, was the utter lack of co-ordination between the festival site and the main camping area. The two were separated by a motorway lined with police cars, to prevent drunken campers crossing the road to get to bed. The correct and official way back to the tents was by festival bus. However, transport arrangements were so poor that guests were more than a mile long for the buses; campers were falling asleep while standing in line. One can only imagine what it would have been like on a cold, rainy night.

Even cattle don't get treated like cattle these days: after all the BSE scares they are now in centrally heated barns with en suite fields, being fed fresh vegetables and given proper psychological counselling before their slaughter. At T-in-the-Park, though, the cattle had their wallets briskly emptied and their faces painted with bright red "T"s before being left to fend for themselves.



CAITLIN MORAN

Nigel Williamson welcomes the Womad festival of world music, which begins today



Into the melting pot: Afro Celt Sound System produce a unique and exciting blend of the musics of Senegal, Ireland and a Breton druid harpist

Thumb pianos from Zimbabwe, zithers from Madagascar, dance music from the barrios of Havana and a troupe of women drummers from Wagogo. The Womad festival, a joyous celebration of exotic sounds from around the world, is with us again.

World music always was a silly title. Yet ever since Peter Gabriel financed the first Womad, back in 1982, the name has stuck in a business that is unable to grapple with anything new until a label can be hung on it. Fourteen years on, Womad is an established and unique part of the festival season in Britain, representing a vibrant concept of marrying music from different cultures and giving worldwide exposure to artists who otherwise might never be heard outside their own backyards.

Yet this weekend's three-day event at Reading is only a small part of the global picture. Womad stages about a dozen festivals a year around the world and has taken its message of musical eclecticism to more than 40 countries. Thomas Brooman, its visionary artistic director, who has been with Womad since the outset, now spends his time travelling the globe for fresh venues and new artists. He is currently planning events in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore and has been looking for a suitable festival site in the Arizona desert. During the Venice carnival this year, Womad followed Pink Floyd and Paul McCartney in staging only the third ever contemporary music concert in St Mark's Square.

If this sounds grand, it was not always so. When Gabriel and Brooman organised the first Womad at Shepton Mallet, Somerset, with the drummers of Burundi, Echo and the Bunnymen, the Chieftains and some Chinese dancers, they

had a budget of £3,000. The Times described it as a "courageous endeavour" but the debts were huge. Gabriel was forced to reform Genesis for a one-off concert to cover Womad's losses.

Despite the early problems, the two men had a clear, if naive, vision. Gabriel says: "We wanted to allow different audiences to gain an insight into cultures other than their own. Music is a universal language, it draws people together and proves the stupidity of racism."

Brooman admits that they were amateurs. "We were devouring all these new sounds in the way that a 13-year-old discovers pop music. It was our enthusiasm for the music that made us want to share it with as wide an audience as possible."

Today the organisation is still small — just nine full-time staff working from Gabriel's Old Mill complex at Box in Wiltshire. But Brooman believes that Womad plays a vital role in the face of the commercial cynicism of the modern music industry. "We are providing an accessible and lively platform so that people can come without prejudice to see and listen and get a broader perspective on music in the world."

Brooman is particularly proud of the educational programme, financed partly by a grant from the Commission

for Racial Equality. Womad is registered as an educational charity and has published a series of books with Heinemann, Britain's largest educational publisher, as well as putting on a range of concerts and other activities in the classroom, highlighting music far removed from the Western classical tradition. "We have really made a mark on how music is taught in Britain. In 1982, Somerset schools sent our packs back in the belief that we were subversives hating them into some devil's cauldron. Ten years later we were appearing on curriculum lists as required reading."

Yet it is the live festival which remains at the heart of Womad. "At its best we transport people outside the usual house of culture to a temporary, surreal village," Brooman says. The global village which hits Reading today promises to be no exception. Some of the biggest names in world music are appearing, including Thomas Mapfumo from Zimbabwe and Jamaica's Mighty Diamonds.

Yet paradoxically the biggest impact this year is likely to come from performers closer to home. The festival has booked a range of British musicians who are spearheading a rediscovery of their own heritage, intermingling traditional folk idioms with world influences to produce something unlikely and often excitingly new and wild. Shogunella, for example, are an

Edinburgh band who add contemporary dance beats to Scottish jigs and reels, while from Wales come Hen Wlad Fy Mamau, integrating Celtic traditions with Asian rappers and Afro-dub DJs.

Most intriguing of all is Afro Celt Sound System, whose producer, Simon Emmerson, believes that the Celts migrated from the Middle East through Africa into Western

Europe. As a result, he says, "the kora and the Celtic harp, the African talking drum and the bodhran essentially seem to talk the same language". Gathering together Senegalese musicians from Beaba Maal's band, traditional Irish exponents of instruments such as the uilleann pipes and a Breton druid harpist, Emmerson has mixed the ancient with modern jungle, ambient and trip-hop beats to produce an unlikely but marvellous collaboration which sums up the spirit of Womad — eclectic, eccentric, anarchic but endlessly fascinating and a welcome antidote to the indulgences and excesses of the rest of the music business.

Womad takes place at Reading, from today until Sunday. Tickets for the weekend cost £50. Tel: 0118-939 0930.

On the global village green

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Coming About

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AS the designation "Orchestra" rather than the more informal "Big Band" suggests, 35-year-old composer Maria Schneider is less interested in out-and-out Basie-ish swing than in impressionistic, multi-textured compositions.

Even the two non-Schneider pieces, John Coltrane's *Giant Steps* and Alex North's *Love Theme from Spartacus*, are transformed into quintessential Schneider arrangements: complex, subtle and many-layered without being unduly esoteric or forbidding.

While Schneider's two most important influences, former teacher Bob Brookmeyer and former employer Gil Evans, are still discernible in her work, *Coming About* is one of the most adventurous — and enjoyable — big-band recordings of recent years.

DAVE BLACKMORE
Fields of Fire
(FMR CD30-E0596)

LOCATED somewhere between the jazz/folk fusion of Llammas and the understated chamber-jazz of Perfect Houseplants, British reedman Dave Blackmore's quartet produces a softly propulsive, intimate sound slightly more robust than that suggested by titles such as *Still Green Way* or *Painting the Colour of the Wind*. Blackmore is equally at home in hard-bop and folk-dance bands, and he sets his group's tone with his pleasantly breathy alto, strident soprano or agile bass-clarinets.

Guitarist Phil Robson is a neat, inventive soloist; bassist Tim Wells and drummer Paul Clarvis provide discreet, supple rhythm throughout. A highly auspicious debut.

CHRIS PARKER

Elvis Costello & The Attractions

OUT THIS WEEK

OUT NEXT WEEK

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Beautifully arranged... with strong moves... songs, this has been... album in many years... The Sunday Telegraph

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Kingly treasures

THE King label tends to get overlooked in the history of rock. Perhaps it is because it was based in unfashionable Cincinnati or the fact that few of its huge roster of rhythm and blues, gospel and country stars (except James Brown) ever crossed over to become big sellers. Yet, as a new four-CD release, *The King R&B Box Set* (King KESCD-7002) proves, its influence was as great as that of Chess in Chicago or the New York-based Atlantic label.

Records such as Earl Bostic's *Flamingo*, Wynonie Harris's *Good Rockin' Tonight* and Lennie Johnson's *Tomorrow Night* were all huge R&B hits while others such as *Fever* by Little Willie John, Sonny Thompson's *I'll Drown In My Own Tears* and *Dedicated To The One I Love* by the 5 Royales became big successes for Peggy Lee, Ray Charles and the Mamas and Papas respectively.

The label managed to survive into the 1960s with the help of James Brown, but his best years were behind it. With most of Brown's soul and funk material already available, this set concentrates on the label's R&B heritage. But missing are contributions from Johnny Otis or Jimmy Witherspoon.

King did not have it all its own way. Decca was able to compete with artists such as the ground-breaking Louis

BLUES ALBUMS

Jordan and Savoy Ballroom favourite Buddy Johnson, whose early hits are included on *Walk 'Em - The Decca Sessions* (Ace CDCHD023). The band was able to turn itself from swing outfit into fully-fledged R&B unit with the help of numbers such as *Fine Brown Frame, That's The Stuff You Gotta Watch* and *Chicago* the outstanding ballad by Buddy's sister Ella. *Since I Fell For You*.

A wider view of that post-war period which saw the death of swing and the birth of R&B is provided by the double CD set *Roots of Rhythm & Blues 1939-1945* (Erlemaux & Associates FAC050). It starts with Jordan and Joe Liggins, before taking in Dinah Washington, Big Joe Turner, Hot Lips Page and the guitar-playing Sister Rosetta Tharpe.

There is a welcome return for an unusual bluesman in the shape of *Out Of Control* by Sonny Rhodes (King Snake KS-031). Unusual in that he is one of the few bluesmen to wear a turban or play a steel guitar on his lap — country style. The turban may add a touch of sartorial flair, but it is the lap steel which brings a new dimension to numbers like *The Pickin' Your Bones* or the brassy *Out Of Control*.

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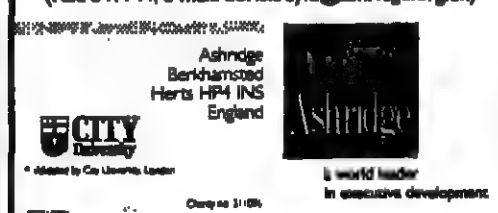
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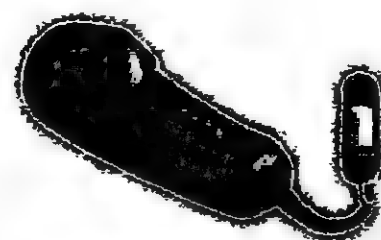
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EDUCATION

Duncan Baxter says the modular exam structure is undermining the traditional sixth-form ethos

Time to save our sixth-forms

A-level standards are likely to be back under the microscope next month if, as predicted, the pass rate continues to rise in line with the growing popularity of modular courses.

However, it is not just the shape of the A level which has been changed by the modular approach, but the nature of the whole sixth-form experience.

Each September I tell every year group who are about to embark on their A-level courses that as well as developing the skills and knowledge they will need for higher education, they should view the coming two years as a time when their values and beliefs will start to take shape: beliefs and feelings that will stay with them for ever. These ideas will come from the general studies programme and through participation in the debate and cultural life which should pervade the sixth-form years.

Their ideas will be argued over and tested in the cut and thrust of life in the sixth-form common room, and by visits to the cinema and theatre, and to lectures.

I tell them that the sixth-formers set the tone for the whole school. If they are intellectually curious, self-

disciplined in their study and take up the opportunities open to them at school, the rest of the school will follow their lead.

And so to examinations. We all look back with fond memories to our A-level study and recall the joy of the public examination-free lower sixth year. It was wonderful to be able to read, discuss and think widely, knowing it was still possible to do well later, in our examinations.

No one now would condone the old-fashioned end-loaded examinations, where cramming during the final weeks or months for O or A level ruled. Thus the advent of coursework, which spread the load, offered opportunities to practise and test other skills, and gave those who did not perform well in end-loaded examinations a chance to shine. It was more work, but we all felt it was worthwhile.

The old adage that "pupils like continuous assessment, but do not like being assessed continuously" comes to mind; the modular approach had arrived.

In addition to increasing choice and diversity through the mixing of modules both inter and intra subjects, this approach was thought to encourage steady work

throughout the course and to provide continuing motivation and stimulation. The first of these advantages is true, although, in practice, not much "mixing and matching" has been done; more, we find differences between subjects highlighted; in some subjects it is not possible to reach the equivalent of A-level standard after one year. The arts and humanities are difficult to divide into segments, because one's understanding of, say, *Hamlet* changes over two years.

This creates an unnatural divide between arts and sciences that does not enhance our ability to broaden A-level study by "mixing and matching".

What of motivation? Well, yes, some students like to have a list of modules to tick off, and it can aid the structure of their time for them. Equally, for many students it exacerbates rather than alleviates the concept of trial by examination.

Modular examinations can also wreck the corporate life of the sixth form. It seems that someone is always in a panic about examinations. We have, perhaps, lost the collective pace, the shared shape of the sixth-form course, where there is the mutual understanding and support of everyone engaged in



Lower sixth-former Giulia Cherci in a biology class at the author's school, Kingston Grammar

trial examinations together, who then generate their own atmosphere when working towards the real thing.

The stop-go modular approach means that the non-modular subjects have to endure interruption to their teaching programmes as students inevitably concentrate on the subject to be examined, and co-curricular activities have the fate at

several times over two years that the second half of the final summer term has traditionally seen.

The modular approach is not the only factor in changing the habits of young minds. The soundbite culture has also affected more than just the way politicians think and speak; it has had a profound impact on the ability of students to focus for any length of time. It is a

common complaint that the concentration span of the young is shorter than it used to be. I always advise GCSE and A-level candidates to use "blocks" of time in their revision programmes so their minds and bodies are used to sitting still in one place for the equivalent time of an examination session — no getting up to make another cup of coffee or to put on another CD.

Surely, something must encourage learning as a commitment to rigorous but enjoyable study in detail, leading to a grand finale?

Increasingly, all educational institutions are being regarded as glorified supermarkets where items are chosen from the subjects likely to yield high grades. The sense of true academy will be lost if we are all engaged in an individual pursuit of custom-built education. What price the camaraderie of everyone aiming for shared goals within a common time frame in an atmosphere conducive to co-operation and the smooth running of a school, where a broad approach to learning should involve time spent in pursuing excellence in music, drama, sport, myriad physical and cultural endeavours?

The brave new world of academic disciplines filtered into bite-sized chunks, whose credit can be transferred over a long period of time, is one solution for higher education or adult or continuing education or third-age education, and for enabling the long-awaited opportunity to mix academic and vocational courses. But should we be thinking about allowing our school pupils to enjoy the fruits of community endeavour and the time to enjoy a balanced education, which will surely create the civilised leaders of the future?

Should we give more thought to what, precisely, a modular approach in school says about the nature of learning and the community of learners?

● The author is Headmaster of Kingston Grammar School, Kingston upon Thames

Who is fuelling fear of school?

There is no link to suicide, says George Turnbull

ChildLine told us recently that 79 per cent of 1,022 school students involved with examinations were worried about them. Nothing unusual in that. But it also said further research revealed suicidal tendencies in some.

If that didn't strike fear into at least some of the overwhelming majority of students who are not unduly concerned about their exams or schoolwork, then the Samaritans surely will — if, as last year, their spin doctors try to link suicides to exams when the A-level and GCSE results are published in August.

With an estimated two million students taking a mind-boggling 11 million separate national school examinations each year, one must question the marketing and promotional ethics of these estimable charities.

There is no evidence to link suicide with school examinations. The Samaritans certainly couldn't provide any last year when I asked them, and the ChildLine press information mentions only one attempted suicide. One too many, of course, but out of millions of students involved with examinations and schoolwork, it is hardly damning.

Indeed, in all but one of the



The vast majority of children cope well with exams

case studies given in the ChildLine press release, the problem was clearly one of parental pressure. Eliminate exams and schoolwork from the equation and the parents would still be there.

Bullying alone accounted for 76 per cent of the 17,004 calls to ChildLine about school worries in 1994-1995. But only 1.5 per cent of the young people counselled in that period had predominantly school problems (covering all aspects of school life except bullying). So why was the impression given that 79 per cent of young people were seriously worried about schoolwork and exams nationally, when the real figure — from ChildLine's own records — is at most fewer than 1.5 per cent of those who are actually counselled?

Evidence exists, however, to link high-profile suicide publicity with increased incidence of the act. We could, of course, ignore this fact. Ignorance may be bliss, but it doesn't solve problems. Education and a positive attitude can.

Twenty years ago the transition from primary to secondary school was traditionally fraught with fear, insecurity and uncertainty. Education, understanding and early visits to the new school helped to take the drama out of what was then a crisis.

But a new and artificially manufactured crisis is emerging, in which students are led to believe that examinations and schoolwork are inextricably linked with suicide and stress. Fear is being instilled through the dramatic portrayal of the severely negative, atypical experiences of the few.

If the results next month are better than last year's, the critics will again claim a drop in standards. The students can't win. And their loss is now to be compounded as "stress" and "anxiety" are marketed like any other commodity. It seems the "cause" is far more important to some than the effect on others.

● The author is spokesman for the Associated Examining Board and Southern Examining Group

Susan Elkin says that for children, going to the theatre should not be regarded as a luxury

Staging a little vital magic

A few years ago I attended an especially delightful performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on a balmy summer evening in Regent's Park. In the front row with her parents and grandparents was an enchanted child, maybe eight years old. It was obviously a birthday treat because in the interval, the adults produced a cake and lit candles for her to blow out. The dreamy, transported look on that child's face spoke volumes for the powerful, imaginative magic of theatre, and she occupies a permanent place in my memory.

We tend to forget, in these

clinical days of national curriculum attainment targets, the strict routine of time-tabled days and the mind-deadening external "entertainment" of television, video and computer games, that children need time and space to explore the world of the imagination as well. As the old *Punch* cartoon had it: "Sometimes I sit and think, and then again I just sit". Modern children seem to get almost no time for either sitting or thinking.

On the one hand many parents regiment and organise their children's lives into closely supervised, structured activities — sport, music lessons, clubs — for every waking minute of every day. "Time is something to be filled every minute must be killed", as Benjamin observed satirically. At the other extreme are those parents whose children seem to bring themselves up with so little adult intervention that they are trapped within the unimaginative insularity of

their own neighbourhood culture. Of course I polarise to make a point, but it's worrying how few parents seem to strike a happy medium. It was therefore a joy to see so many children happily exercising their imagination in the relaxed and charming atmosphere of the Polka Theatre in Wimbledon the other day.

The Polka is the only children's theatre in London. To step inside its doors is to enter another world. It is full of primary colours, activity and vibrance. Big window displays in the foyer illustrate fairy stories and past productions.

As well as a garden for picnics, there is an attractive café for families. A soft-floored open-air playground in a pretty, leafy shaded courtyard lies through another door. Lots of children were excitedly tumbling about in the Wendy house and on the slide while they waited for 2pm and the time to go into the theatre and sit down.

We were there to see *Three Cheers for Mrs Butler*, a musical play based on the poems and characters of Allan Ahlberg, adapted by Vicky Ireland and with music by Colin Matthews. And what fun it was. Mrs Butler's primary school class goes through everything which primary school children know about and think about.

The interaction is beautifully presented, from the Welsh headmaster who reiterates: "In this school we work hard and play hard", to the teacher who seems more concerned about lost scissors than mis-



Dystin Johnson in *Three Cheers for Mrs Butler*

ing children, the hamster which keeps escaping from its cage, the child who can only read slowly and the one who misbehaves because he wants someone to notice him.

The five to 11-year-old children in the audience were spellbound — by the story, the music and the magic of theatre.

Polka has two theatre spaces — the larger one with conventional tip-up seating, where these older children watched *Three Cheers for Mrs Butler*, and a cosier, less formal space with plays for three to five-year-olds. Polka relies on sponsorship for its several productions each year, many of which are also performed in schools and community centres.

Three Cheers for Mrs Butler is sponsored by Filk Flak. The same company has financed the "First-time Project" which will enable 1,200 children who, for financial reasons, have never been to a theatre performance, to come to Polka this summer.

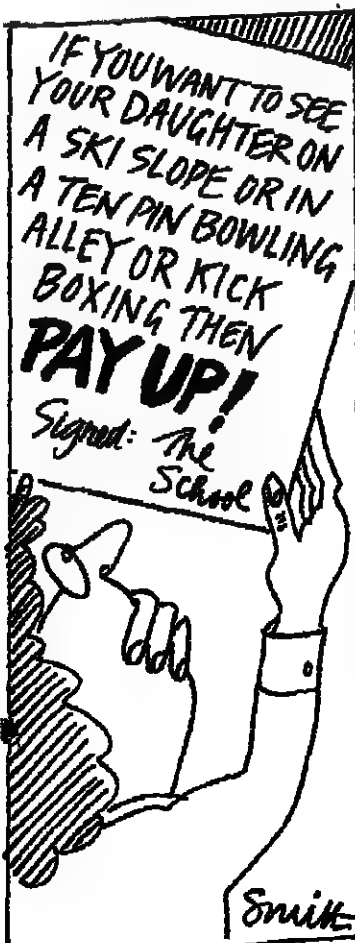
bolt-on extra — a luxury item — for the privileged few, on the periphery of a chillingly functional education system.

Children can learn so much in a theatre: about the world, about other people and, crucially, about themselves. The chance to embark on the sort of imaginative journey which theatre provides is a critical part of every child's development. Plays take you away from where you are. They challenge without threatening. Characters do and say things which unshackle thoughts.

That, presumably, is why the Puritans closed the theatres during the Commonwealth in the mid 17th century. Freedom of thought was not on the agenda. Theatre was also censored in the Soviet Union. Theatre is powerful. Surely we want our children to experience and grow through that power?

● Polka Theatre, 240 Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB (0181-543 4888). *Three Cheers for Mrs Butler* runs until August 17.

Children need time to explore the world of fantasy



Pay up — or face humiliation

The 'contributions' schools demand are too much for many households, says a parent

My 13-year-old daughter was at home for three days this week. She should, of course, have been at school. She was not ill, just saving herself from being the object of discussion and humiliation. As her mother I supported her in her request to be allowed to stay at home.

This week, at her school in Kent, was "Arts Week" when for three days no formal study took place. The pupils could choose various activities in which to participate — one morning, one afternoon for two days and then a compulsory day trip for the last day.

These activities have to be paid for and it is here that the problems arise. We are all aware that unemployment is high and that income in many homes is only sufficient to meet necessities. As the mother of four children, all attending school, I face these problems on a regular basis.

The cost of "Arts Week" could be in the region of £20. This is a large amount of money to be found from a family budget where there may be one or two wage-earners, but could be impossible to find where there is no wage-earner at all. Schools will tell us that it is

impossible for them to fund every child for an activity or school trip. I appreciate that this is the case, but the letters that are sent home from schools do not help.

The schools commonly state that if there is no parental contribution then events and trips will have to be cancelled. "Contribution" is the key word. Most letters will state "...in order that this visit/event may take place a contribution of £XX is required". The letters also state that "no child will be excluded because of inability to pay. Please see your form tutor in confidence to discuss the situation." We now have parents being placed in a degrading situation. Why should THEY have to go, cap in hand, to discuss their personal situation and finances?

Our school went one better than asking for a parental contribution this year. A letter came home listing the activities available for my 13-year-old daughter. Kick-boxing, swimming, animation, modelling, Indian cultural

day, board games, field games, ten-pin bowling and dry-slope skiing. Beside each activity was the cost — not even a mention of "contribution".

It was a classic case of pay up or else. The "or else" was the problem for my daughter. She, as a vulnerable 13-year-old, actually had the courage to approach a member of staff to explain that we could not afford the amounts required. Humiliating enough, you might think, but worse was to come. She was then told that nothing could be done to help her. If you cannot pay, then you have to stay in school with pupils from another year and take part in normal lessons.

Demands for money are constantly being made by schools. The National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations estimated earlier this week that parents are subsidising their children's education by £1.3 billion annually.

Three of my four children came home with letters in one week. The first came from my nine-year-old

daughter — a trip to Chatham Historic Dockyard. The dockyard is only ten miles away but the cost was £6.50. Two days later my 13-year-old came home with a proposed visit to Rochester Castle and Cathedral, at a cost of £4.50. The final straw came two days later from my eldest son, studying his GCSEs. He was also expected to go to the Dockyard. The same journey of ten miles but a cost of £8. A total expenditure of £19.

School visits are more frequent than ever. No parent wants to be seen as impeding their child's education, no matter what difficulties they may be facing. So they worry themselves senseless and scrimp and save in order to pay.

My 13-year-old daughter will return to school today with a letter stating that she was ill — a lie, we know. As her mother I am prepared to lie to save her and her family from any further embarrassment. Roll on the day when government ministers, LEAs, school governors and head teachers realise that parents are not a never-ending source of money.

● The author wishes to remain anonymous

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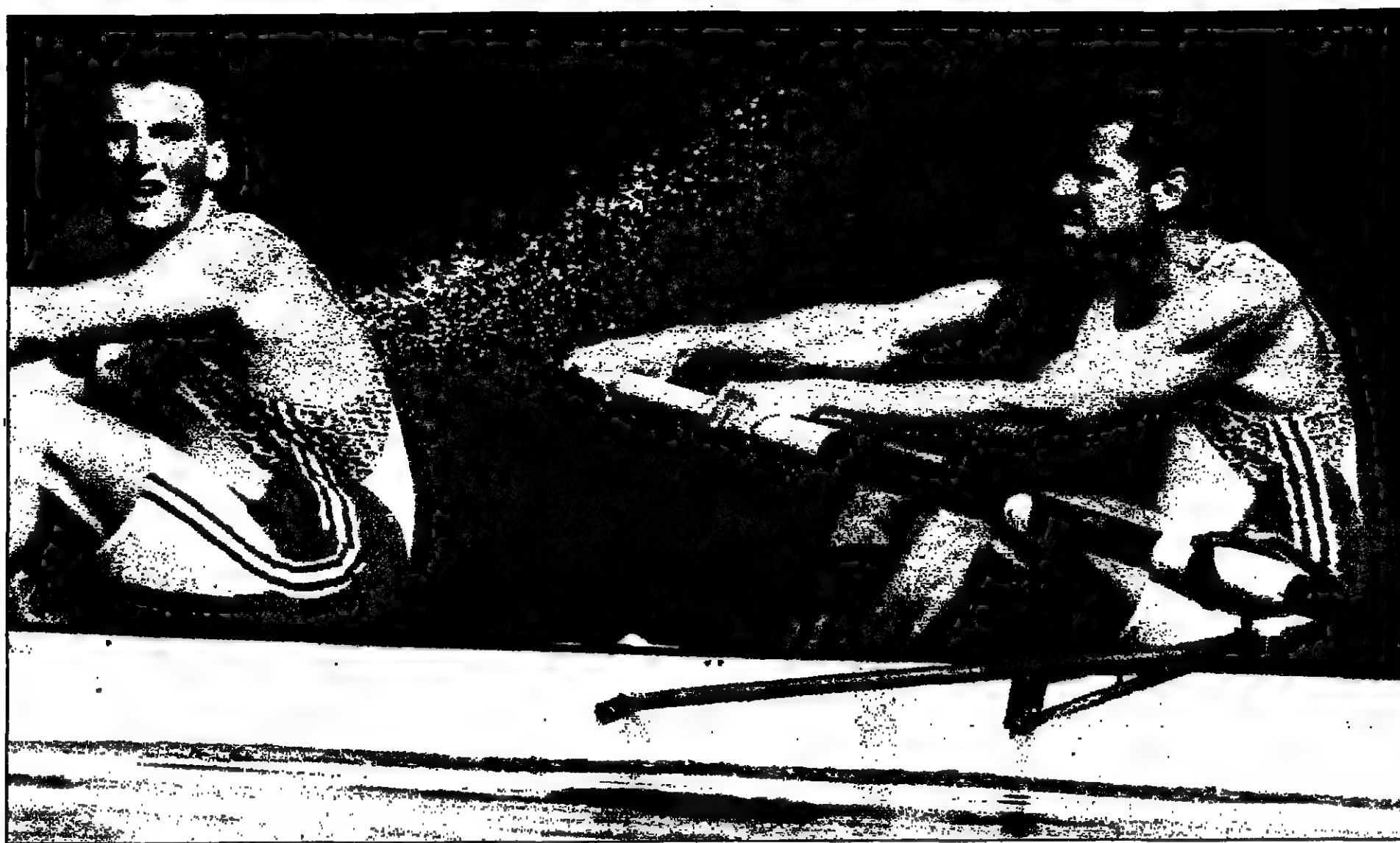
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OLYMPIC GAMES: REDGRAVE AND PINSENT'S DAUNTING DOUBLE ACT CAN PROVIDE BRITAIN WITH A SINGULAR MOMENT TO SAVOUR



Pinsent, left, and Redgrave will be aiming to rekindle the magic of their Barcelona performance when they compete at Lake Lanier next week. Photograph: Simon Bruty

Heartbreakers feel pulse of victory

FROM DAVID MILLER
IN ATLANTA

THE builder's son and the person's son, one nine years older than the other, one dyslexic and the other an Oxford graduate. One moody, driven, and deeply introspective; the other respectful of his unique colleague, yet a catalytic harmoniser. Together, brilliant. Physically beautiful. Technically, near perfect. Unbeatable.

Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent can, alone, make the centenary Olympic Games memorable for Britain. They bring to rowing what Lasse Viren, of Finland, did to running. Endurance plus a devastating finish. The defence of their coxed pairs title at Lake Lanier tomorrow week should be one of the epic moments of the next fortnight. They are the Rolls and the Royce of the British Olympic team.

Redgrave is reaching for a record unequalled in modern times by anyone other than Al Oerter, the United States discus gold medal-winner at four Olympics. Besides three golds and one bronze, the latter in the coxed pairs in 1988, Redgrave has six world championship golds. Pinsent has an Olympic gold and four world titles.

There are some 200 strokes

in the 2km race. In the past four years they have trained the equivalent of 30 hours for each stroke. There are seven minutely-synchronised phases to one stroke. In unison, the massive power of two men is concentrated, funnelled, delivered and released through two small blades as though it came from one motor. "There shouldn't be a single stroke not thought out," Redgrave said. "Never mind that their heartbeats soar beyond 160 as they near the finish."

About to row the first race of the season this year, in Italy, against most of their expected rivals in Atlanta, Redgrave murmured to Pinsent, sitting in front of him: "They've been dreaming of winning Olympic gold all winter. Let's take their dream away." They did, at a canter.

The intimidating prospect for every other pair is that the two Britons can match any one's endurance, at any stroke-rate, for seven-eighths of the race and then produce a demolishing sprint over the last 250 metres.

That is what they did at the Banyoles course four years ago in Barcelona, and it was one of the most awesome sights of the Games. While the hair's-breadth victory of the Searle brothers in the coxed pairs was the race of the Games, the crushing margin

of Redgrave and Pinsent was the performance of the Games. Their target for next Saturday is to go four seconds faster.

For no reward other than the grant and sponsorship that bring in upwards of £30,000 a year, much of it absorbed in training and travelling expenses, they have continued their search for flawless balance and rhythm under stress. So focused has been their monk-like devotion to the cause, they have not paused to think how they will



1990. With Andy Holmes, Redgrave had won the coxed pairs in Seoul two years before, while Pinsent was still a junior world championship gold medal-winner. In the winter of 1989, Redgrave's new partner, Simon Binesford,

handle life after Atlanta.

The one thing we do know," Pinsent said, "is that it will be easier with a gold medal in your hand."

Of course they might lose, but it is never a possibility that they contemplate.

They came together in 1990. With Andy Holmes, Redgrave had won the coxed pairs in Seoul two years before, while Pinsent was still a junior world championship gold medal-winner. In the winter of 1989, Redgrave's new partner, Simon Binesford,

was injured and the merger with Pinsent, Redgrave reflects, "was a natural."

Their harmony surprised even rowing acquaintances, the more so when Jürgen Grobler, their coach, switched Redgrave to the back of the boat. Could he, difficult and, in many ways, a loner, accept this?

"I think we're quite good at communicating," Pinsent said, perhaps overlooking that his articulate manner helps make this possible. "We pick out each other's moods, we compete with each other [in training schedules, in strength trials] but it never spills over into something you can't leave at the [locker room] door. There are no grudges."

Redgrave, reluctant to articulate, a man who had left school at 16 and by the time he met his wife had hardly read a book, had been known to throw things.

Yet so huge is Redgrave's capacity for work, so unsparring his self-denial, so exceptional his rowing talent, that Pinsent felt emotionally bonded to him by admiration, if nothing else. When they won in 1992, they instinctively knew that they would continue to Atlanta. Together they had discovered a sporting liaison with which few are blessed.

Such is the mental synchronisation in the boat

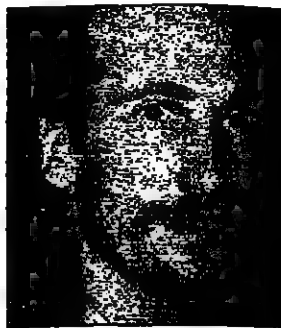
that Redgrave can read Pinsent's moment-by-moment reaction merely by looking at his back. In the extremes of fatigue that rowers experience, they feel no pain. If there is pain in a race, then they know something is wrong. At the conclusion of heats and semi-finals, they never show elation or weariness: that would reveal to rivals that they were relieved, or drained. Heartbreakers indeed.

They have that pure, absolute ambition of the greatest sports performers, such as Matthews or Hutton or Coe: to define themselves by their achievements. Should any commercial reward come their way, it will be nice but coincidental. "We train each day till we know we have done enough," Pinsent said, as if it were a matter of clearing up paperwork at the office.

They smile unreservedly at confusion among the public about their fame. "Is the little guy with you today?" is often the question from those confusingly referring to Johnny Herbert, the Searle's cox at Banyoles, who burst into tears on the victory podium. Redgrave and Pinsent have only the Atlanta podium on their minds, but if they should fail, then they might try again. "We'd want to do something about it," Redgrave said, dazily.

Body of water forced to go against the flow

SIMON BARNES



Atlanta sketch

YOU hear a lot about "sacrifice" at the Olympics. I am not happy with the term: you can't really sacrifice something for yourself, can you? But it is true that elite athletes have chosen not to live like the rest of us. They have done so in order not to be like the rest of us.

They do not even look like the rest of us. The best place to understand that is at the pool, since the athletes are more or less naked in front of you. William Burroughs called the human body "the soft machine": watching the swimmers, you can see that he was right about machine, but wrong about soft.

What is it that these people, supreme athletes to a man, to a woman have — no, not sacrificed — but anyway done to get like this? And what parts of normal life have they given up? Tom Dolan has given up breathing.

A bit extreme, that. Dolan stands 6ft 6in and is a lean, pared-down 12st 12lb, including earring and goatee. And he suffers from asthma: so badly that twice he has passed out in the pool. This is a fairly dangerous place to choose for passing out. "I went under. Grabbed a lane-rope. Felt really out of it. Then I got out and sat in a chair. That's when it really came on," he said.

Dolan also has a congenitally narrow windpipe. It is 20 per cent narrower than it should be. Breathing, then, is not a straightforward business for Dolan. He never knows when a problem will flare up. Mostly it happens during practice, but that is because he spends most of his life practising like most elite swimmers, he swims upwards of 100 kilometres a week. But it has happened in competition as well. "I just try not to worry about it," he said.

A lot of swimmers have asthma: in fact, many asthmatic children go into the sport because doctors believe it is good for the condition.

But exercise can also prompt asthma attacks. For Dolan, sport is a permanent threat to his well-being. Something perpetually in ambush, loss of feeling in his arms and legs and then black-out. The condition would probably diminish if he gave up trying to be a champion. "I am a competitive person, it doesn't matter if I can't breathe or if I pass out."

There is plenty of medication available to asthma sufferers, but most of it is banned for competitive athletes. This grieves Dolan, because he reckons he would go faster if he took them. Athletes are like that, you see.

He shares the spotlight in the United States swimming team with Janet Evans. She is now at her third Olympic

Games and has four gold medals. She is 24 and bubbling over with excitement about her impending retirement.

"I want my shoulders to shrink so I can wear sundresses," she said. "So I won't swim for at least a year. I'm looking forward to sleeping in and not smelling of chlorine. After ten years of chlorinated water and looking at a black line — I just want to try something else."

There is not an ounce of regret in her voice, still less self-pity. She has achieved wonderful things, but they do not come without a lot of years and a lot of chlorine. It has not been a life like anybody else's. And then to the pool, where Evans, like an old dog, is counting her work-out to retirement. "Six more! Six more!" All swimmers look extraordinary, as I say, but there, at a corner, are the most extraordinary of all. This is the China women's team.

They seem neither begotten nor made, rather extruded by some extraordinary industrial process. So sleek and smooth: there appears to be an extra muscle, one that the rest of us don't possess, grafted onto the front of their thighs.

I saw a swimmer from Taiwan walk past them, same Chinese features but a normal, if wonderfully athletic, body. Ying Shan, the biggest of the women from China, is tipped to win the 100 metres freestyle. She rose from the pool for a moment's break in her work-out, powerful and impossibly smooth, and for a moment you wondered if she was able to breathe on land.

What has she "sacrificed" to become such a person? What life has she led? But Chinese athletes operate through a veil of mystery, one pierced by occasional revelations. The diver, Fu Mingxia, did not see her parents for the three years before she became world champion at the age of 12. Hunter S. Thompson said it: "When the going gets tough, the weird get going."

Pound survives an unlikely challenge

FROM DAVID MILLER

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC), it is alleged, is run by old men out of touch with sport. With the election to the executive board this week of Thomas Bach, of Germany, an Olympic fencing champion in 1976, there are now six medal-winners serving on the board.

There are two champions, Pal Schmitt of Hungary, also in fencing, and Bachi Kevan Cospo, of Australia, on the track, and Chic Igaya, of Japan, in skiing, both won silver medals. Richard Pound, of Canada, a swimmer, and Anita DeFranz, of the United States, in rowing, each won bronze.

On Wednesday, the IOC narrowly avoided acute embarrassment when Pound was elected vice-president by only two votes, 46-48, ahead of Ashwini Kumar, of India. If Pound, a Montreal QC, were paid for the services he renders to the Olympic movement as honorary executive, it would cost several hundred thousand dollars a year. He is the negotiator who has secured, from television and

sponsors, deals worth several billion dollars that make the Games secure up to 2008. Additionally, he chairs two important commissions dealing with new sources of finance and co-ordination of the Games.

To have rejected him would have been absurd. The trouble is that Pound has been his own worst enemy, intolerant of fools and impatient with rank-and-file IOC members. "Maybe I'm not the most charismatic," he reflected, shocked by the apparent snub from half the members.

The vote was a reflection of two factors: resentment from the floor of his aloof power and long-term manoeuvring by rival candidates to succeed Juan Antonio Samaranch as president, such as Dr Un Yong Kim, of South Korea, and Mario Vazquez Rana, of Mexico. Kumar, elderly and dignified, was no more than a pawn for Pound's attempted removal. The message, however, is loud and clear. There are voters out there who have to be politically courted if the IOC is to stay on course.

Fame helps Van Almsick's fortune

Craig Lord on whether the queen of swimming can find her golden crown

THE richest swimmers in the world have arrived in Atlanta and are ready to capitalise on their communist past. Amid the melee of medal-chasers, coaches and cameramen at the Georgia Tech pool, it was easy to find the richest woman in the sport. Just follow the line of 40 or more zoom lenses.

At the end was Franziska van Almsick, born in East Germany but long-since blessed with the riches of the west. The frenzy over "Franzi" is understandable, the allure of her aquatic, chic model and a propensity to drama.

This weekend will be the most important of her sports career, and her bank balance, for years to come. Between her and an Olympic title stand the Chinese, first in the 100 metres freestyle early tomorrow, and then on Sunday, when she will line up in the 200 metres with Chinese newcomers worthy of replacing Lu Bin, who was suspended for steroid abuse after finishing runner-up to the German schoolgirl at the world championships in 1994.

Also in the reckoning in the latter is Claudia Poll, a tall Costa Rican of German extraction but at the pool yesterday,

all focus was on van Almsick, who has attracted DM5 million (about £2.1 million) since winning four medals, none gold, at Barcelona in 1992.

Poll, practising two lanes over, was all but ignored by the German media, a dozen of whom are employed solely to follow their star. The South American, who begins training at 4am in water measuring

13°C, claims to have earned "virtually nothing from my sport".

The only European woman likely to steal van Almsick's thunder is Krisztina Egerszegi, of Hungary, who has also benefited from early beginnings in a regimented state system but who now wallows in the financial rewards of her excellence.



Van Almsick, paddles strapped to her hands, trains at the Georgia Tech pool in Atlanta yesterday

Memories appear short for Chinese

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

CHINA'S Olympic officials appear to be suffering from a monumental lapse of memory if the comments of Wei Jizhong, the secretary-general of the Chinese Olympic Committee, are anything to go by.

Wei, who is also the deputy chief of staff for China in Atlanta, said: "Our swimmers are still being wrongly accused. The record demonstrates that Chinese swimmers have not been testing positive. It is not fair."

It is also not true, as 19 Chinese swimmers have been suspended for drug abuse since 1991, among them Lu Bin and Yang Aihua, both world champions, and all but one of the tests were for anabolic steroids.

Wei notes that Jessica Foschi, an American teenager, had tested positive and had still been allowed to compete. He failed to note that Fina, the international governing body, has suspended Foschi for two years, just as it did with the Chinese. He also linked to the Chinese experience the case of Samantha Riley, of Australia, the world champion breast-

stroke swimmer. Wei failed to note that her offence involved a substance found in a headache pill — a world away from 18 steroid tests.

South Korea's only medal-winning biker competitor is in hospital with a broken wrist after crashing on the road leading to the venue on Wednesday. Lee Jin-ok, 34, fell off his bike inside the Georgia International Horse Park compound and was taken to nearby Rockdale for surgery.

The Mongolia team has arrived in Atlanta being dispersed over three continents. They were split up after their scheduled flight from Peking was cancelled and they were obliged to take other flights.

At Oerter, a four-time gold medal-winning discus thrower, will be the last torch bearer before the Olympic flame enters the stadium for the opening ceremony in Atlanta tonight.

A total of 192 national teams have registered at the Games with only five — Laos, Burma, Turkmenistan, Guinea-Bissau and Sudan — still to arrive.

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GOLF: HOME CROWD PROVIDES SOME PREMIUM BONDING AS TOURNAMENT FAVOURITE CELEBRATES IN STYLE

Faldo puts the icing on birthday cakewalk

IT WAS Nick Faldo's 30th birthday yesterday, and even though he strode out to greet the day at 7.30am there were plenty of other early-risers there to help the favourite for the Open Championship light his cake. His comrades brought different gifts as he teed-off in search of his fourth Open title, and, after an unpromising start, he blew the candles out.

Fuzzy Zoeller, six years older, brought along his courtly manner and good grace, which appeal to everybody. His department is as deliberate as that of Jerry Lewis in *The King of Comedy*, and his play was bright. True to form, he whistled a few happy tunes (when he was out of Faldo's earshot) and enjoyed himself thoroughly. He would have gone round in two under par had he not two-putted on the final green.

Robert Allenby, the 35-year-old Australian, brought his youthful enthusiasm and a growing reputation. His 74 was part of that familiar routine for young men on the rise, the "learning process". It included a seven on the par-four 3rd, when he took a drop. The crowd that followed the three players brought their goodwill, and by the end of a round that began with a bogey on the 1st, Faldo was happy to return it.

"I've never had so many people cheering, and supporting me, so it was nice," he said. "I'm very appreciative." Faldo has not always craved, or earned, popular acclaim but when he came up the 18th fairway he was hailed as an emperor, which, in a way, he is.

MICHAEL HENDERSON



At Royal Lytham and St Annes

The Open has become his kingdom in the past few years and he is not about to relinquish the *droit de seigneur* just yet. To prove it, he signed off with a regal birdie, his fourth, to give him a three-under-par 68.

All in all it was a fair day's work, after he had struggled initially to sink puts on the slow greens. Chance after chance went begging until his luck began to change.

"I had the chances but, in the end, I was just pleased to play the back nine in three under par. That was pretty good," he said.

For Allenby, a stick-like colt from Melbourne, the day was a mix of delight and disappointment. He was a shot up after the 1st, three down after the 3rd and hit an eagle on the par-five 6th. He finished three over after saving par on the 18th, where his tee-shot sliced



So close: Faldo gives vent to his anguish as an attempted birdie putt at the 17th narrowly misses the target

into the crowd. There were times, though, when he seemed to spend more time in the sand than Lawrence of Arabia.

Faldo had risen at 5am, a challenging hour for any clear-headed sportsman, and a bogey four at the 1st was the prelude to an hour of scrapping for par. He made a birdie at the 6th and came within a tissue of adding four more until a superb tee-shot on the 11th enabled him to achieve another.

With his sails nicely filled on a scorching day, Faldo was now in his element, striding

forcefully from tee to green. The crowds along the fairways picked up his mood and when he putted from 12ft at the 15th for his third birdie, there was much whooping.

Regrettably, there was also that verbal abomination, "Way to go!", from an English voice. Like the wearing of a baseball cap back to front, it is a silly American practice appropriated by the weak-minded for no necessary purpose.

Otherwise, the crowd remained responsive and fair-minded in their acclaim for good shots. To watch golfers as good as these in blissful

conditions is about the best that sport can offer, and the spectators contributed enormously to the glory of the day. By the time Faldo underscored his signature on that final green, with a 15-footer, player and crowd were thoroughly bonded.

The birthday boy said he was happy, and he goes out today handily-placed. He knows he is capable of the lower scores he feels are essential.

"If the wind stays down there will be a lot of scores of four and five under, and it was important for me to get some-

where close," he said. "With no breeze, and a short course, I think the Americans are going to be very strong this week." That includes honorary Americans, like Faldo.

He opened his presents later, but what could he give to his fellows? A penny whistle might suit Zoeller and a bedouin's cape would, perhaps, disguise Allenby the next time he ventures into bunker territory.

As for Faldo, it is hard to please the man who already has everything. By Sunday night he might have even more.

Impatient attitude exacts its penalties

By JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

WHY does Colin Montgomerie have such difficulty in the opening round of the Open Championship? Starting in 1990 at St Andrews, he has not once broken par in his first round and nor did he yesterday. He was level par as he stood on the 15th tee, two over as he walked off the 18th green. A 71, which would have been the highest acceptable score on a day when scoring was easy, became a 73 when he took a six.

Was he unlucky or did he play badly? Both is the answer, as was illustrated by successive strokes at the 18th. His drive toppled into sand with its last rotation, but then he decided against a cautious explosion from a fairway bunker and paid the penalty. His ball rocketed into the reeveled face of the bunker, rebounded and nearly hit him, which would have been a two-stroke penalty.

It should also be noted that Montgomerie hit some magnificent drives, often on holes where Brad Faxon and David Frost, his playing partners, used irons from the tee. "He is very confident with the driver," Faxon said, a touch of admiration in his voice.

Montgomerie shimmered in the heat and shimmered close to boiling point throughout much of his round. As early as the 6th he was complaining to David Garland, of the PGA European Tour and the rules official accompanying his threesome, about spectators with cameras. On the 15th tee he was heard to say that the Masters "has it right. No cameras, no press". On the 17th he railed at someone: "You can hide, you've done it now."

His inability to block out actual and potential irritations is disturbing in one so good. "You wouldn't want to be near him if you were a fan with a camera," Faxon said. "It is as if he is happiest when he is telling someone off." Montgomerie was feeling frustrated for, though he had driven well, he had putted diffidently. He was short with his first putt on the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th, 9th and 16th holes. The longest putt he holed was three feet. One reason for this is that he did not get the ball up to the hole often enough for it to have a chance of going in.

When he rolled in a six-footer on the 10th and followed this with a magnificent fairway wood on the 11th, one thought he would shed this burden of impatience. "Come on, grumpy," a fan said and momentarily he looked more cheery. It did not last long because his ball bounced into a bunker on the 12th and into a difficult position from which to play, from near the back wall. He continued to hit some good shots, his second on the 16th, his second on the 17th being good examples.

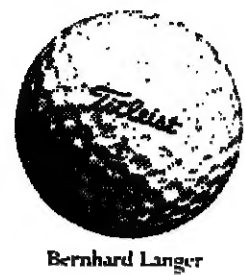
Yet he gave the impression to spectators and playing partners alike that he was operating on a short fuse. Patience is an attribute he has yet to learn. As Faxon was to say later: "It is hard to play golf without it."



Ernie Els



Steve Elkington



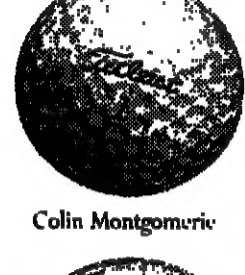
Bernhard Langer



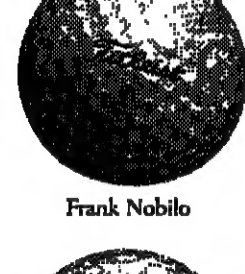
Davis Love III



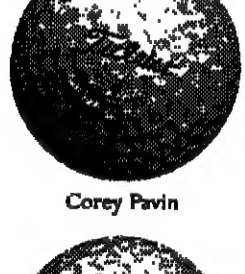
Phil Mickelson



Colin Montgomerie



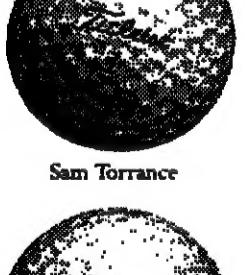
Frank Nobilo



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Costantino Rocca



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Welcoming the 19th hole with Open arms

I would like to recommend Ansdell and Fairhaven station. It is an unconventional railway terminal boasting but a single platform at which the train stops on its way south to where Albert was eaten by the lion: a quarter of an hour later the three-carriage diesel returns from whence it came — Preston.

The northeastern exit of Ansdell and Fairhaven station is an excellent place to be, especially if you have goodish eyesight or own binoculars. It is adjacent to the 8th green and overlooks the short 9th of Royal Lytham and St Annes. A man could stand there and get a pretty adequate idea of what goes on without the hassle of buying tickets, displaying badges and waiting for people empowered to control the ebb and flow of humanity, to direct them hither and hence. It was from this vantage point that I observed

three men I did not know hit balls I could not see to a green that was just out of vision. But by the applause accorded one player, the oohs that met the others and the body language of all participants I followed proceedings with considerable enjoyment in the company of folk who were making a day of it there.

"Should work harder," Freud favours the easy way, schoolmaster Rotherham wrote in my end-of-term report many years ago. Recalling this harsh assessment of my industry, I summoned the energy to make my way along neat suburban roads to the clubhouse and media centre. Once arrived, I followed the Open Championship as the organisers intended. Once again I have failed sartorially. My trousers were long when the fashion is to wear shorts, my shirt was a primary colour, long-sleeved and tailored while all around wore T-shirts in pastel shades

Clement Freud concludes his summer season with a disappointing visit to the links of Royal Lytham and St Annes

and I had neither Panama hat nor spiked shoes.

There are a number of ways of watching championship golf. You can occupy a seat in a stand surrounding a particular green and become hugely knowledgeable on, say, the short 5th. Take it as your subject on *Mastermind*, read about who did what, when, at that location in the eight previous Lytham Opens. It is a minimalist pursuit, the half-acre in your field of vision confines pleasure though in the distance is the scoreboard which tells you of players' progress around the course.

Or you can select a threesome and follow them on their four-and-a-half-hour peregrination, learn their

strengths and weaknesses and admire the officials who hold up "Quiet" and "Stand still" signs. I expect they go home and tell their families they are "running the Open".

Refreshment points are dotted around the course: very ordinary cold fizzy drinks. Obvious food from the consumption of which people dissuade you. Egg and sausage sandwiches, really thin white wine, heavy hog-roast buns unsuited to temperatures in the eighties.

At around noon I disengaged myself from the marching crowd, many of whom wore Senior Citizen labels in their lapels; this is downright cruel, as if you could not tell by looking at us. I sit down overlooking the

18th green, sit next to a man with so immaculately creased red trousers that he hovers to preserve their sharpness. The 18th is 414 yards. In the distance you see three huddles of player-and-caddy lining up second shots and three balls land on the green: plop, plop, plop; we applaud, applaud, applaud.

The players approach the green, Faldo, Zoeller, Allenby, and putt to obtain respectively birdie, bogey, par. Fifteen minutes later Faldo appears in the media centre for his interview. "Talk us through the highs and lows of your round," his inquisitor said.

"The first I pulled a three-iron, had a good save on three flying a five-iron; six I came up short, good pitch; good save on 13, holed from 15 feet and birdied the last; last nine in three under," Faldo speaks in a monotone, told a questioner that teeing

off at 7.30am presented no problem; he got up at 5am. Another got the message that it was great to have so many people supporting him, shouting happy birthday. There was no smile.

As a performance it was entirely dull and patronising to boot. Faldo manifests neither fluency nor warmth: district surveyors' reports at housing committee meetings are more fun to witness. Were he less than staggeringly brilliant, he would have few fans.

Of course, it is not over until the fat lady sings and she has yet to approach the piano. By Sunday evening, when the winner walks up the final fairway to the whippers of "He's the man", some 200,000 spectators will have been to Royal Lytham. With the exception of those getting paralysed in the sponsors' tents, watching the event on television, I envy them hardly at all.

Daly's gallop halted over closing stretch

By PATRICIA DAVIES

IT ALL started so well for John Daly, the defending champion, at Lytham yesterday but the glory of being five under par after 11 holes became dearer, dearer with four bogeys in the last seven holes.

There was a calm, cool, otherworldly atmosphere as he, Phil Mickelson and Satoshi Higashi waited to tee off in the shade.

"On the tee, John Daly," announced Ivor Robson, the starter, and that was it. The defence began without acclaim or applause because there is no room for stands or fans at Lytham's first hole, a par three of 206 yards. Daly hit and, eerily, there still was not a sound because the blond bomber, who has hair at the moment, instead of a G1 stubble, had missed the green.

It was the left-handed Mickelson, all silky smoothness and deliberation, who took the initiative with birdies at the 2nd and 3rd. He narrowly missed a 12-foot putt for another birdie at the 4th and his game rather misfired from there on. His second nine included four bogeys and he finished with a round

of 72, one over par. Daly holed a three-footer for his first birdie, at the 3rd, visited a tangle of rough at the 4th — but had a good lie and secured his par — before a run of three successive birdies. He was not happy with his tee-shot at the 5th — a hand came off the club — but he rolled home a 27-foot putt for an unlikely two.

The driver came out for the first time at the 490-yard 6th, where he bombed the ball over the bunker on the left, a carry of about 250 yards. "Was that the driver?" a spectator opposite the ball, asked. He was 320-odd yards from the tee but such is Daly's aura that the fan was not sure the man from Arkansas could not hit the ball that far with an iron.

All he needed was a sand-wedge to the green and he was even more awesome at the next, 553 yards of par five. The drive left him with 171 yards to the pin and he hit a wedge. Two drivers, two fairways hit; mere birdies were poor reward.

He also birdied the 11th, the third and last par five but the rot set in when he was bunkered at the short 12th and his six-foot putt to save par hurtled four feet past the hole. Daly dropped another shot at the next, which he played via the grandstand. A par four at the 14th was routine — a drive that landed on the front of the 6th tee, further left than Lenin ever was, a blind second shot over bushes to the front of the green and two putts.

Daly is rarely dull and his capacity to entertain and amaze make him compulsive viewing. Having started in silence, he finished to tumultuous applause.

TEE-OFF TIMES

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated

07.00: R Bower, T Price (Aus), S Luffa (Sp)
07.11: D Dwyer (US), W Austin (US), B Lane
07.22: J Leonard (US), B Ogle (Aus), P McIlroy
07.33: S Simpson (US), S Elkington (Aus), S Cipe
07.44: E Romano (Arg), L Jansen (US), C Rocca (It)
07.55: W Blanton, A O'Brien, S Barnes
08.06: J Daly (US), P Mickelson (US), S Higashi (Japan)
08.17: M Jonzon (Swe), R Tway (US), S Anner (Fin)
08.28: M Calzaghe (US), C Stricker (US), P J Johnson (Swe)
08.39: G Brand, J Shimoyama (Japan), J Nieldus (US)
08.50: V Singh (Ind), M Furry (Fr), J Puryk (US)
09.01: T Henson (US), M McIlroy (Zim), A Coghlin (US)
09.12: A Coburn, F Nobilo (NZ), M Brooks (US)
09.23: P Hedberg (Swe), S Elia (It), C Stadler (US)
09.34: C Perry (Aus), A Lyle, P Asinger (US)
09.45: D Clarke, R Gossens (SA), T Woods (US)
09.56: S Orlowski (US), M Price (Zim), P Watson
10.07: J Robson, S Garcia (Sp), T Hamilton (US)
10.18: G Player (SA), C Pavin (US), J Woomers
10.29: P Mickel, M Campbell (NZ), R McInnes (US)
10.40: C Mason, T Bon (Den), S Bettendor
10.51: S Grapenhorst (US), C Sorenson (Sp), R Todd (US)
11.02: G Love, D Russell, M Finkel (US)
11.13: J Coorens (Arg), S Tinning (Den), K Fukunaga (Japan)
11.24: D J Russell, D Houghton (Sp), G Brown
11.35: K Eriksson (Swe), M Hultberg (Den), J Townsend (US)
11.46: M Mackenzie, A Langenast (Bel), R Wilson
11.57: P Lewis, J Fawcett (Sp), S Watts
12.08: D Gilford, I Baker-Finch (Aus), P Stewart (US)
12.19: N Faldo, R Albery (Aus), F Zoeller (US)
12.30: R McFarlane, S Hughes (Aus), W Mayday (US)
12.41: F Couples (US), M McDunbro (US), P Harrington
12.52: L Woodhead, S Jones (US), W Piley (Aus)
13.03: M James, P O'Halloran (US), T Toles (US)
13.14: J Parnell (Swe), R Charles (NZ), P Jacobson (US)
13.25: B Langer (Ger), T Kile (US), Y Kaneko (Japan)
13.36: H Tanaka (Japan), S Ballesteros (Sp), J Mielgo (US)
13.47: S Faxon (US), D Frost (SA), C Montgomerie
13.58: D Foherty, J Haeggen (Swe), D A Wolberg (US)
14.09: J Hoss, P Senkar (Aus), H Clark
14.20: M O'Meara (US), T Lehman (US), A Forsbrand (Swe)
14.31: L Roberts (US), G Turner (NZ), S Torrance
14.42: G Norman (Aus), S Stricker (US), J Payne
14.53: R Eales (US), W Westner (SA), P Eales
15.04: M A Jimenez (Sp), A Johnston (US), J Murray (US)
15.15: P Brochard, D Borrego (Sp), D Love III (US)
15.26: R Drummond, S Field, M Welch
15.37: R Chapman, R Loe, H Mascher (Japan)
15.48: I Reid, F Tarnaud (Fr), B McColl
15.59: D Smyth, A Leacock (Fr), A Mednick (Swe)
16.10: G Emerson, S Allen (Aus), M Lillon
16.21: E Darcy, S Murphy (US), A Sherborne

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Norman fails to make storming start in opening exchanges

Mel Webb witnesses the unusual sight of the Great White Shark merely treading water

IT IS a frustrating business, taking a four-mile hike in the heat of the day and getting nowhere. Greg Norman forgot the way yesterday and looked thoroughly lost. Talk about a good walk spoiled — for all the progress he made, he might just as well have been taking a stroll on the beach with his dog.

At least he did not fall into the awful pit he has dug for himself in major championships; that of making haste backwards at inopportune moments. It is a disease that is characterised by what might be called Shark Syndrome, the principal symptom of which consists of a sharp decline in form followed by severe injury to the curriculum vitae.

He has had so many setbacks in majors, either due to his own frailties or the heroic deeds of others, that it has become almost a way of life. Other men's psyches would have crumbled to dust long before now; Norman, whatever else, is nothing if not resilient.

He was playing on this opening day with Steve Stricker, the young American whose two US Tour victories have brought him sudden fame this season, and Jim Payne, the lean and lanky Italian Open champion from the flatlands of Lincolnshire. For a good deal of the time, Norman was outplayed by Stricker and made to look merely human by Payne. It was not, all in all, a terribly satisfactory day for the Australian.

Indeed, for most of it he was living in close proximity to anonymity, if being a 6ft 11in blond in a big white hat can be called anonymous. He was even put in the

shade, in height if not in achievement, by the 6ft 4in Payne.

Norman occasionally has days like this, days when he has a distracted air about him, in the piece but not of it. When in this mode, he hits the ball well enough, but no more, off tee and fairway, he is adequate from short range, while the most damaging part of his game is that he cannot buy a putt for love nor money, the latter of which he has coming out of his ears.

Only once on a low-key front nine did he sink anything worthwhile, a

12-foot putt on the par-five 6th bringing him an eagle after he had hit a good drive followed by a six-iron second shot pin-high to the left. Apart from that, it was not stirring to behold; just a random collection of pars with a couple of three-putt bogeys, from 15 and 25 feet, thrown in for bad measure.

He had his chances on the very much tougher back nine — on four holes running from the 13th, he missed by a gnat's eyebrow on the slow Lytham greens. Others in a similar situation would have cursed their lack of luck. Norman was almost impassive; he was, in the argot of the Irish, away with the fairies.

He was not downhearted after he had signed for a 71, level par, but then he rarely is after the first round of a major. It was not possible to win the Championship yesterday, but it was most assuredly feasible to lose it. He did not do that, so lives to fight another day.

"I feel I'm right in there," he said, with a touch of asperity. "This is a 72-hole tournament, not an 18-hole medal. My putting let me down. I haven't putted well since May. I must be more aggressive — the greens are slower than we are used to, but at this level we should make the transition without problems — but I'm still confident."

It was said with an air of hope rather than expectation, and a phrase involving the dark and whistling in it sprang immediately to mind. Over-brightness in dismissing him from contention should, however, be strenuously avoided; people have done that before to their cost.



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Posse of Americans gathering to threaten a surprise British leader at the Open

Broadhurst reaps Lytham dividend

By JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

PAUL BROADHURST had a good year in 1988. He won the Lytham Trophy at Royal Lytham and St Annes in the spring and the silver medal for being the leading amateur in the Open Championship at the same venue in July. That knowledge of the intricacies of the course was further augmented when he made a reconnaissance visit to this part of Lancashire in January.

Yesterday Broadhurst received a dividend on the investment he has made in time spent at Royal Lytham. By going round in 65, six under par, and equalling the course record, he opened up a



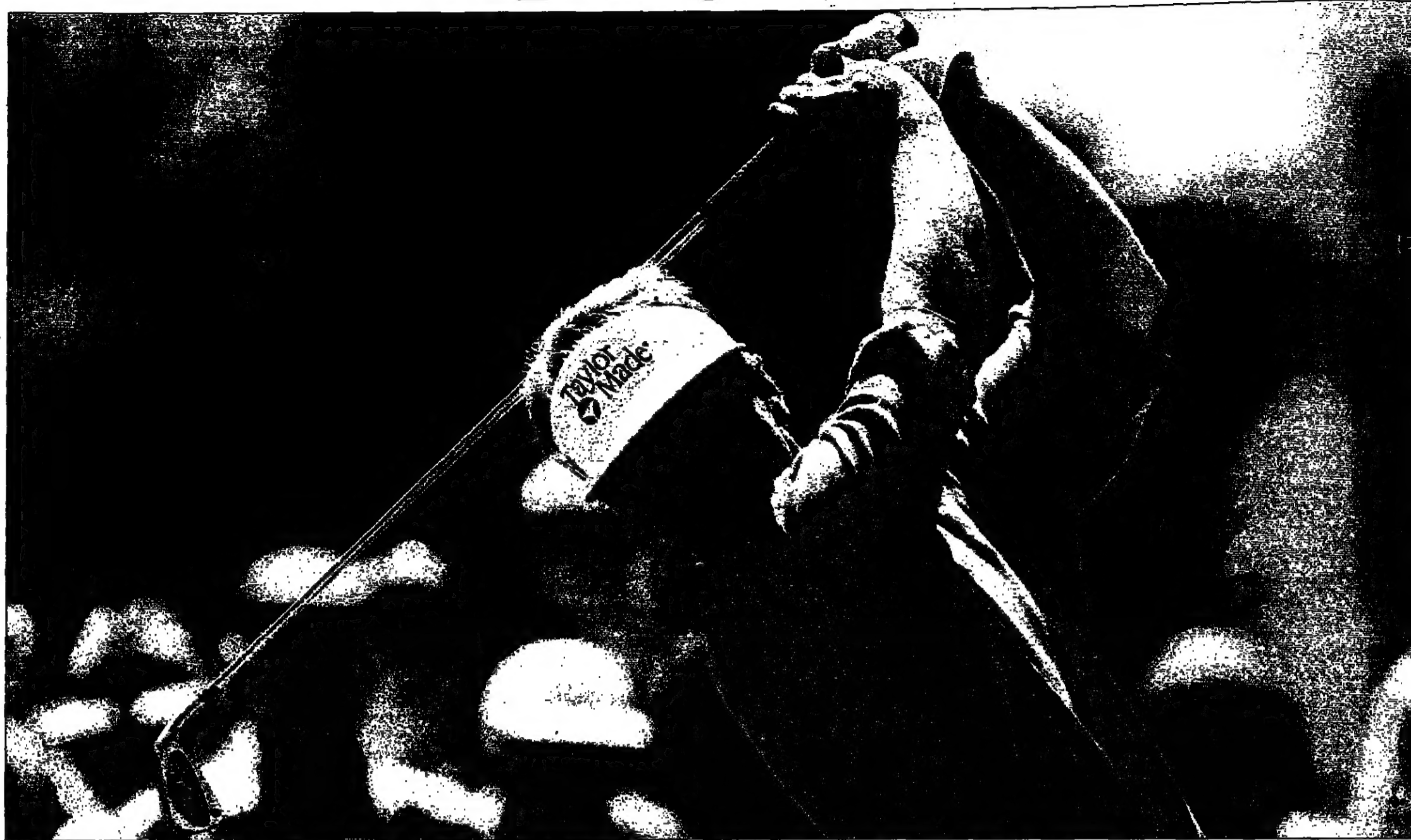
THE OPEN

Clement Freud 41
Faldo's cakewalk 41
Daly's gallop 41
Norman stalls 41

two-stroke lead in the first round of the 125th Open. Give him full marks for trying.

On the European Tour Broadhurst resembles Costantino Rocca in that things happen to him that do not happen to others. He five-putted one green during the Scottish Open at Carnoustie last week, for example, and ran up a nine in the third round of the French Open last year, which he won with a dazzling last round of 63. He had a 63 in the 1990 Open at St Andrews, too.

All those achievements were exceeded by his round yesterday, which was the stuff of dreams. It contained one eagle, four birdies and 23 puts, 11 of them in his last ten holes. "Everyone thinks of leading the Open and I am no exception to that," Broadhurst, 30, said. "I was a bit concerned looking at the leaderboard with all the Americans there. I am surprised it is not windy."



Broadhurst swings into action on the 16th at Lytham yesterday, on his way to a record-equalling 65, six under par, and the leadership of the Open. Photographs: Ian Stewart

Normally it is. Whether that is why the Americans are doing well I have no idea. It is summer over here and you do get some sunny days in summer. I am sure the Americans prefer it this way."

Such ideal conditions as existed yesterday make for crowded leaderboards and before play had ended nearly one third of the field had achieved scores of par — 71 — or better. Broadhurst is chased by a posse of competitors on 67, four under par, including the Americans Fred Couples, Tom Lehman, Loren Roberts, Mark O'Meara, Brad Faxon,

Mark McCumber and Mark Brooks. There could hardly have been a more determined start to the American professionals' attempt to take home the Open trophy from Lytham for the first time.

One stroke behind them is Nick Faldo, whose 68 was sealed by the way he played the inward half in three under par, after earlier enduring one of those spells when he did everything right from tee to green except hole-out with one putt.

Jack Nicklaus had a 69 to prove that being unable to get out of bed in the morning is no

handicap to playing good golf and is presumably preferable to tripping down the stairs of one's hotel, falling over and breaking the second toe of one's left foot, which is what happened to Curtis Strange. Nicklaus's back had been in spasm. "I couldn't stand up, I couldn't sit down, I couldn't do anything," he said. "I was real pretty this morning. My body was so twisted I looked like a pretzel."

Nicklaus telephoned Pete Egosue, a man he describes as an anatomical functionalist in San Diego, and with the telephone sometimes to his ear

and sometimes resting on the floor, Nicklaus did one exercise after another as instructed by Egosue until his back was sufficiently pain-free for him to play. Then he played what he described as a pretty good round of golf.

Beware the injured golfer indeed. Nick Price, who will have an operation on his sinuses later this year, received a considerable ovation when he marched in the fading sunshine towards the 18th green with Ben Crenshaw and Philip Walton. He had a 68. Paul Azinger, on his way to a 74, snapped his putter over

his knee on the 9th and putted with an iron thereafter.

The Scot who first said: "If there's nae wind, it's nae gowf," would have snuffed disapprovingly at the conditions here yesterday. In the morning there was a blue of Mediterranean clarity overhead and in the stillness of the glade where the 1st tee is half-circled in an embrace of trees, it was so quiet that it was possible to forget the competitors were teeing-off.

The course looked as though it should have been there for taking. Nevertheless, it had too much spirit to be subdued

by everyone. Ballesteros, for one, failed to master it.

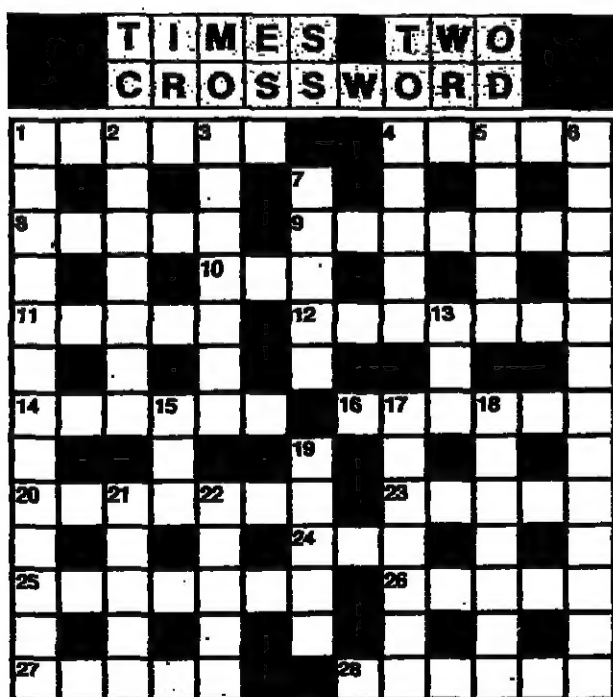
The highlight of his otherwise modest round came when he slashed a wild drive to the right of the 16th and then birdied the hole. "This time there were no cars," he said, laughing. Ballesteros could do no wrong in front of an adoring gallery and could do little right from the tee.

John Daly, the defending champion, scorched to the turn in 31 only to bogey four holes coming home for a 70, one under par.

"When you wake up in the morning and see the condi-

tions you know you must make a good start," Faxon said. "You have good greens in front of you and it's time to go. No wind at a British Open is very unusual." He emphasised his concern at the number of withdrawals by Americans this year, saying that 11 US PGA Tour professionals had signed up to try to qualify and four had withdrawn. "That is a poor ratio," he said.

"If you are a young American and you are trying to get your card maybe you should stay at home. But this is the Olympics of golf."



No 838

- ACROSS
1. World, when worshipped (6)
 4. Causing death (5)
 8. Take-away sign (5)
 9. Graduate (US) (7)
 10. Pet whip (3)
 11. Shark: look after (5)
 12. Raging fire (7)
 14. Vent: channel (6)
 16. Group of geese (6)
 20. Pete raffle (7)
 23. Discouraging mark (5)
 24. Obtain: receive (3)
 25. Seize: attention from (7)
 26. Position-detecting beam (5)
 27. Door-to-jamb fastening (5)
 28. Light: game often not worth it (6)
- DOWN
1. Critical juncture (6,2,5)
 2. Mosque tower (7)
 3. Not for family viewing (7)
 4. Woolly particles: get lines wrong (5)
 5. Copier powder: cosmetic (5)
 6. Bottle out (4,4,5)
 7. Erik —, *Gymnopédies* composer (5)
 13. Hen product: incite (3)
 15. Play (ball) over one's head (3)
 17. Country: shilling its currency (7)
 18. Protected: non-committal (7)
 19. Bet (5)
 22. Skilled stoneworker (5)
 22. Make speech (5)

The solution to 837 will be published Wednesday, July 24

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EARLY FIRST-ROUND LEADERBOARD

4 Par Royal Lytham and St Annes: Par 71 (5,892 yards)
Outward nine - 35 (3,330 yards); Inward nine - 36 (3,562 yards)

Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Yards	205	437	457	393	212	490	553	418	164	334	542	198	342	445	463	357	467	414	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Par	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
P Broadhurst	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	65				65
F Couples	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
H Tanks	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
M McCumber	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
B Faxon	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
M O'Meara	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
T Lehman	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
L Roberts	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67
M Brooks	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	67				67

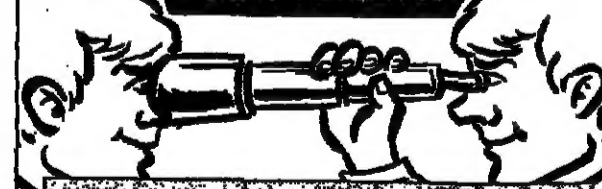
OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

- Great Britain and Ireland unless stated
- 65: P Broadhurst.
- 67: F Couples (US), M McCumber (US), H Tanks (Japan), B Faxon (US), M O'Meara (US), T Lehman (US), L Roberts (US), M Brooks (US).
- 68: N Faldo, P Harrington, S Moriyama (Japan), J Furyk (US), E Els (SA), N Price (Zim).
- 69: J Maggert (US), P McGinley, J Nicklaus (US), M Jonzon (Swe), V Singh (Fiji), M McNulty (Zim), R Mediate (US).
- 70: P Stewart (US), F Zoeller (US), B Hughes (Aus), B Mayfair (US), M James, D Frost (SA), J Haas (US), A Johnstone (Zim), B Ogilvie (Aus), E Romero (Arg), P J Johansson (Swe), J Daly (US), M Farny (Fiji), P Hedblom (Swe), F Nobilo (NZ), D Clarke, C Pavin (US).
- 71: M Mackenzie, D Gifford, L Westwood, R Charles (NZ), D A Weir (US), G Norman (Aus), S Snicker (US), M Welch, B Lane, S Simpson (US), C Rocca (It), C Strange (US), S Ames (Irn), C Stadler (US), A Lyte, T Hamilton (US), G Player (SA), P Mitchell.
- 72: A Langenecken (Bel), R Wilson, J Parnevik (Swe), P Jacobson (US), J Haggerson (Swe), H Clark, G Turner (NZ), S Torrance, J Payne, J Sluman (US), D Love III (US).
- 73: R McFarlane, S Jones (US), W Riley (Aus), P O'Malley (Aus), T Toles (US), Y Kaneko (Japan), C Montgomery, B Estes (US), P Falis, E Daray, A Sherborne, W Bladen, B Barnes, A Cejka (Ger), B Crenshaw (US).
- 74: J Rivero (Sp), R Allenby (Aus), S Ballesteros (Sp), P Senior (Aus), D Borge (Sp), F Arnau (Fiji), B McColl, S Cagle, L Janzen (US), T Herron (US), C Pamy (Aus), P Azinger (US).
- 75: B Langer (Ger), A Forsbrand (Swe), M A Jimenez (Sp), A Mednick (Swe), S Allan (Aus), S Elkington (Aus), S Higashi (Japan), T Woods (US), J Robson, I Woodsam, M Campbell (NZ).
- 76: H Meshai (Japan), G Emerson, S Murphy (US), D Duval (US), S Garcia (Sp).
- 77: T Kite (US), D Feherty, R Lee, T Price (Aus), A Oldcorn.
- 78: P Lawrie, I Baker-Finch (Aus), W Westner (SA), R Drummond.
- 79: J Leonard (US), R Tway (US).
- 80: B Watts (US).



Nicklaus, who needed transatlantic physiotherapy to get to the course, plots a putt with his son, Jack Jr

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